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NEW STATESMAN

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The 4½-Per-Cent Solution

Labour's version of the social contract is in many ways a political triumph. It has brought together all the human resources of the movement, and left the Tories with practically nothing to say – certainly nothing of value or importance. So much can be conceded at once, even if the Healey-Callaghan style is not one which encourages debate or dissent on the matter. But even that attitude is significant in itself; it indicates that the Government know what a risky course they are taking, and what the price of failure might be. It also reveals the severest shortcoming of the Budget, which is that its provisions are short term. Obviously this is justified to some extent by the urgency of the situation but few government spokesmen seem to have thought ahead, say, to the point where a Chancellor might wish to increase taxation. What price the trade-off then?

Since the Chequers 'summit' last November the strategy has been a clear and consistent one. The clapped-out body of British industry is to have life breathed into it by encouragement of the profit motive, and the hope that increased profits, once retained, will be used to finance the investment which all agree to be the most desperate need. Obviously, such a policy makes wage limitation the keystone of the political argument, and Labour's triumph has been to sell the idea to a reluctant TUC. Not only that, but to do so without any firm or genuine assurances about the price level. Planning has become a matter of wage regulation. It is this aspect of the case which gives the Left critique of Healey its force. Why, it is argued, should Labour stake all on the recovery of a system which has so conspicuously failed to generate investment in the past? And what promise is there that next time will be different? The warning to unions and MPs that 'boat-rocking' will only help the Tories certainly loses much of its force if the policy itself is a Tory one, and the consequences of failure so advantageous to the Opposition.

From a radical point of view, the theoretical objection to incomes policy is that, success or fiasco, it leaves the structure of society and the distribution of wealth almost untouched. Only marginal changes can be made, and the political thrust for reform is deflected by the mundane business of managing differentials. This could be especially true of the current policy, which deals almost exclusively with earned income. Recent squeals from the *Daily Mail* (most of whose readers are presumably on PAYE but who yet are expected to sympathise with the plight of the rich tax dodger) only underline the point that in our society people are not taxed directly on their wealth (whatever became of Mr Healey's wealth tax proposal?) but on how much they actually earn. The absence of any policy for real redistribution adds to the disquiet which many already feel about the present strategy.

The Left's position, however, is fatally undermined by the casual attitude too many of its adherents take to inflation. Crudely put, they are right to insist on economic reconstruction, and the Chancellor is right to insist that the immediate priority is the defeat of the inflationary menace. But, as the Cambridge school and others have argued, no counter-inflation policy will be secure or successful unless the structure of the economy – in effect, the whole idea of Britain as a trading nation – is first protected and then overhauled. What shall it profit the Government if it does fight inflation down to single figures and then sees the economic lifeblood of the country drain away? It should be unnecessary to mention also that there could be very severe political consequences if wage-earners sacrifice real income in good faith and find that they are worse off and the economy is no better off. Superfluous to mention it, no doubt, if it were not for the fact that nobody is mentioning it. Already, though, the stubborn persistence of high unemployment is putting a great strain on the ability of trade unions to lie down with the Government. And it is not even pretended that the position here will improve. Recent events on the international money markets have shown how appallingly vulnerable the country is. If the present policy is to win real acceptance it must be coupled with an urgent interventionist strategy within industry.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Delargy's Last Stand

Behind all the drama of last week – the accusations, the recriminations, the cries of 'Ah!', the avowals of honour, the sound of running feet in the car park, the purring of the ministerial limousines – behind the fatal controversy which caught up Hugh Delargy, lies a simple and obvious ambition: the ambition of the Opposition to govern. Of course Margaret Thatcher is restless, and her supporters are urging her on. They are separated from government by the length of two swords, and as they watched the resignation of Harold Wilson, the smooth election of his smooth successor, as John Stonehouse plucked up his 15,885 Labour majority and handed it over to Frank Hansford-Miller, a phrase about a tide in the affairs of men began to recur in their eager frustrated minds. Surely a government that loses its overall majority, which presides over such a dramatic fall in sterling, must now be vulnerable? Surely this was the time to attack?

The opinion of Hugh Delargy was also quite simple – he simply could not see why Labour should let its legislation get caught in the Tory propellor. The Government, being his government, must govern. I found Delargy a most attractive man – but he was certainly not above indulging in what you might call Jesuistry (Jesuitical casuistry) in order to achieve his ends. His career in politics began and ended with an honourable ruse.

Returning from the Western Front in 1945, he went in uniform to a selection conference in the Platting division of Manchester – only to find that he was too late to speak. The committee apologised profusely, but the proceedings were supposed to be over. Absolutely, said Delargy, and he was certainly very sorry to be late, and would not dream of holding up the proceedings any longer. Then the committee began to be slightly worried. Would Delargy like to speak? Perish the thought, said Delargy, it was absolutely out of the question, even though he had been unavoidably detained by his duties. Well, said the committee, the rules could be waived. Heaven forfend, said Delargy, rules were rules, and anyway he really felt that he was not properly equipped to stand, he had been out of the country for so long and had lost touch with politics, and these other gentlemen who had been able to follow things from close to were obviously better qualified. By the end of his remonstration, he was being begged to speak. He spoke, and was unanimously selected.

The first time I met him, he handed me a note for my editor, in Latin: 'Amicus Tony, sed magis amica veritas.' ('Tony is a friend, but truth is a greater friend.') He used the same tag in his final speech to the House, and he was fond of wandering off into Latin in his conversation. His friends are now saying that had he gone into the Church, for which he had trained, he would have had a notable career – it would have been Cardinal Delargy now. I don't know about that, but he had certainly retained a certain Roman cunning. As the first rumblings about the Committee of Selection began, he explained his views as follows.

The Standing Order was vague, he said, and laid down that the composition of the committees should reflect the composition of the House. There were however several ways of looking at the composition of the House. Up to now, it had been taken to mean that there was one block of votes for Labour, one for Tory, and that the rest were all lumped together. Since Labour had a large majority over the Tories, that meant in his view that they should continue to have a majority on committees. It is after all the job of the Standing Committee, when examining a Bill line by line, to reflect the will of the House. The Bills that come before committees have already been accepted in principle. But, if the Tories insisted on pressing their luck, it was time to look at the gentlemanly agreement by which the independent parties were taken together, and in that case, the Liberals, the Scottish Nationalists and the others would lose out. Whatever happened, Labour was going to be tough.

On Monday night, in the adjournment debate, Delargy addressed the House. The place was packed. Most members were present, the pairing arrangements had broken down, and even the duty minister in Northern Ireland, Dennis Concannon, had to be helicoptered back in the nick of time. For the next night, on the anticipated second debate, Dickson Mabon was ordered back from Miami, where he had just arrived to negotiate the sale of British oil-rig expertise (the debate was later cancelled). The House on Monday was rowdy and expectant, like Milton's Belial 'flown with insolence and wine', and it would have been a hard task for anyone in Delargy's position to calm the mob he faced. Leaning forward as he spoke, so that his shins pressed against the back of the bench in front of him and one began to wonder how he could keep his balance, he began to outline his case. It was not an electrifying performance, but it was, I thought, very amusing. I had imagined that the air of injured innocence had been simply assumed for the occasion. So when the Liberal Whip, Alan Beith, made a rather clever point, Delargy paused for a moment, realised he didn't have an answer, and said calmly: 'I may be unusually slow tonight, but I cannot see the relevance of that question.'

In fact, Delargy *was* upset about the row, and remarked after the debate: 'I may not have done very well, but at least I think they don't think I'm a shit.' His last words in the Commons had been:

> . . . the four Labour Members of the Committee have been accused in the House and in the Press, chiefly by people who did not know the facts, of cheating, twisting and lying, of submitting to pressure and bending the rules, and all sorts of dishonourable conduct. We are not dishonourable men, and we have done no dishonourable thing.

That point was taken by the House, but the support for Delargy's decision was qualified. Michael Foot thought that, even though the Committee had acted in accordance with the Standing Order, there was a case for changing the rules. And that was what he offered the House as a compromise. Bob Mellish, in a generous piece of self-appraisal, put forward a view which was not all that much different from that of the Tories.

He poured scorn on the minority parties: ('Somebody once said that the Irish were as thick as two planks'), on the Liberals' notorious record of non-attendance at committees ('a more bone-idle lot I have never met') and on the leader of Plaid Cymru ('so reactionary that he makes me feel ill'). But the drift of his argument, much of which was addressed to Delargy, was that the yielding of the majority need not destroy the committees and that, whatever happened, the damage done in committees could always be made good on the floor of the House.

Essentially then, even though Labour won the vote, thanks to a little help from the Ulster Unionists, Delargy's decision on the Committee of Selection was not vindicated. Foot was concerned to conciliate the Opposition, and will no doubt proceed to do so. In the meantime, the Government is in an overall minority of three. The two vacant seats will be filled at the earliest opportunity, and it would take an unprecedented swing to put them into any other hands but Labour's. The fate of Mr Stonehouse's seat rests on the bizarre defence he is conducting in the Old Bailey. Should the case go against him, the whole argument will become a thing of the past. Meanwhile, Mrs Thatcher is going to have to find some other road to power. She has been told to do something about her hair. She has responded. She has been told to change her image. She's going to try. She's been told to get a half-way decent shadow cabinet. That may prove difficult. Maybe she will simply have to wait a long time. Let's hope so.

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Alexander Cockburn

The American Morality Trail

Richard Nixon raised him up. The voters of Texas and Indiana dashed him down. He may indeed rise again. But for President Ford the times are bitter. Only a week ago he and his advisers still nourished hopes that the Texas primary would finally dispose of Ronald Reagan. Only two weeks ago it still seemed that the race for the Democratic nomination was still an open one and that the Democratic Party would rend itself in pieces on the floor of Madison Square Garden next July. Now, after Pennsylvania, after Texas, after Indiana, the sun has risen on a new political landscape. The nomination of President Ford is in doubt. The nomination of Jimmy Carter is almost assured. The Republican Party may be moving towards a débâcle as severe as that inaugurated by Barry Goldwater in 1964. There are many who believe that beyond a doubt Jimmy Carter will be the next President of the United States.

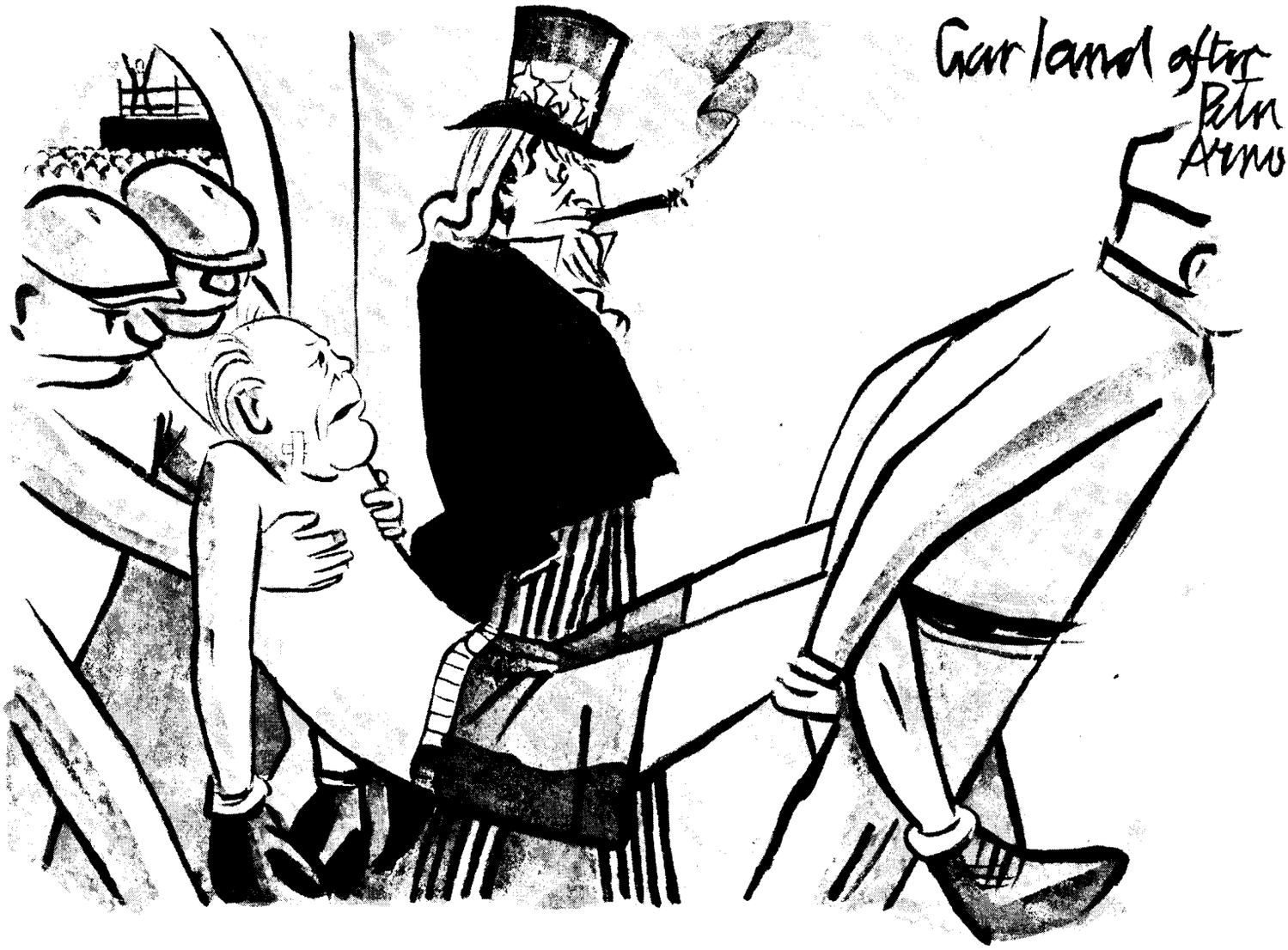
The magnitude of Ford's loss in Texas, where he failed to win even one of the 96 delegates elected, was itself horrifying for an incumbent president. But a victory in Indiana would at least have represented some form of rebound. This too was denied him last Tuesday. Before him now lie weeks of interminable campaigning, the prospect of a savage convention in August and – should he survive this experience – the vista of an autumn battle against a man whose own primary trials appear already to have concluded.

Suddenly, in his afflicted state, there is little that the President can do right. He cannot afford to remain in Washington and adopt the pose of the Chief Executive, above the struggle. Into the field he must go, wooden of speech and dragging around with him the ball and chain of Watergate and his pardon of Richard Nixon. In Texas he tried rather pathetically, to make Nixon a non-person. He referred to him as 'my predecessor' or, even more bizarrely, as 'Lyndon Johnson's successor'. Such futile attempts to obliterate the past merely aroused hilarity or indignation. His efforts to assuage the right-wing furnace stoked by Ronald Reagan are equally undignified, despised by moderate and extreme Republicans alike as squalid and desperate manoeuvres.

He faces a revitalised Reagan. Only a few weeks ago that tanned countenance bore the marks of forlorn, bewildered endurance. The cosmetics he wears from dawn to dusk on the campaign trail merely accentuated the uneasy tautness of his skin. The modulated voice seemed to quaver on the edge of hysteria, as if in sudden realisation that the Indians really had broken into the encampment, about to plunder, ravish and lay waste.

The turning point came in North Carolina and with the half-hour speech bought on network television and in fact recorded over seven difficult hours. It is not as though, after Texas, Reagan was jaunty. Even after Indiana he still seemed curiously detached from reality. It is just that no uncertain tremor now disturbs the even flood of banality and nonsense which is finding such favour with a substantial segment of the Republican Party and with many right-wing Democrats. Reagan, according to those who worked with him in the Governor's mansion in California, is incapable of initiating anything.

Only on the rare occasions that he bestirred himself did he seriously afflict the state he nominally ruled for eight years. All his energies cohere in 'The' Speech', a



'All of a sudden you stop saying "we".'

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compendium of reactionary cliché which he has been uttering in varying though basically similar form for the last 15 to 20 years. 'The Speech' is now largely about the Panama Canal, about the horrors of big government, about welfare chisellers, about the Russian threat. It consoles and seduces all those who feel, like Reagan, that 'We could have paved over North Vietnam and been back for lunch': all those who feel that those who want to eat should work, all those who feel that taxes simply represent theft perpetrated by Washington.

It still seems inconceivable that Reagan could win the nomination, but then, only last week, it seemed inconceivable that Ford could lose it. On the day of the Indiana primary I had lunch with Pat Brown, Governor of California between 1958 and 1966 and father of Jerry, the present incumbent Brown. Even ten years after his defeat by Reagan, he still seemed to have difficulty in understanding how it had happened. 'I underestimated the guy,' he muttered, 'just like Ford is doing now. All through the campaign I never laid a glove on him. In the end he just walked past me.' Brown Sr may feel suspicious of Reagan – already moderate Republicans are talking again of finding their own candidate. At this stage in the game this seems unlikely, but even the talk shows how much ground Ford has suddenly lost and how much more he is probably about to lose.

And all the time Republicans observe the truly incredible spectacle of a Democratic Party, in May of an election year, already in the process of uniting around its candidate. The noises coming out of the Carter camp are now somewhat presidential in tone. Carter is cutting back his time on the campaign trail, is now conferring magnanimously with former foes, studying matters of national import, even talking of a Humphrey endorsement later in the month.

And of course Humphrey's refusal to enter the primaries was another amazing spectacle in this memorable week. It was an H.H.H. performance right down to the wire, with anguished conferences with aides, family, politicians across the country. When the news came that he would announce his decision in the Senate caucus chamber it was widely believed that Hubert was going to run again. Kennedy and Johnson had both made such announcements in the same venue. But no. Hubert cried a little and stayed out. Carter remarked afterwards that he was a little disappointed at Humphrey's decision, implying that he would have liked to run against and presumably crush the old campaigner in a one-to-one contest. Lingering in his mind may have been the fear that Humphrey could still arise from the ashes in the Convention and reap the harvest of mistrust that Carter still undoubtedly provokes.

Not all Democrats have suddenly learnt to love Jimmy Carter. Last week I watched Governor Jerry Brown campaign in Maryland, whose primary is to be held later this month. It was the first time the young Governor had left California since his elevation to office. In California Brown has kept his popularity ratings at an extraordinarily high level by telling the citizens of his state to 'lower your expectations', by living 'austerely', by talking a lot and doing very little. Such behaviour has earned him a national reputation, as was instantly apparent in Maryland.

It was plain, watching the young *guru* governor in action, that he is the only politician apart from Carter with the ability to tap into the religious current which is evidently abroad in this bicentennial year. Carter does it with a revolting brand of pietistic evangelism. Brown uses the idiom of nonchalance, of fatalism, of self-depreciation, of absorption in self – all aspects of the cult of self-awareness so prevalent among white middle-class Americans. Almost in the manner of Lord Balfour, he seems to be saying that nothing matters much, and very little matters at all. He speaks of the relative powerlessness of a president, of 'planetary realism'. 'Let's talk about it properly when I have time,' he told me when I taxed him with some contradiction in his statements. 'Let's talk and let it flow.' Like Carter, though in a less unpleasantly manipulative way, he plays the politics of anti-politics, confident that one day, if not now, his time will come.

On the one hand, with Ford and Reagan, we seem to be back in the Goldwater rhetoric of the early 1960s. On the other, with Carter and tangentially Brown, in a language utterly disconsonant with the political realities of American capitalism in the mid-Seventies. Sometimes it is very hard to imagine what Americans in the various primaries actually think they are voting for. It is certain that it in no way resembles what they will eventually get. Perhaps that is the inevitable result of an election filtered through the years of recession, Watergate and Vietnam.

New York

David Leitch

Michel's Last Demo

The most original and perhaps disquieting of the innumerable student demos that have dislocated French education this spring took place last week in Nevers. Here more than 2,000 high school pupils carrying white banners without inscriptions gathered to express their solidarity with . . . what exactly? It is hard to explain because the demonstrators themselves were in the grip of powerful and confused emotions.

What set them marching was the death of an 18-year-old called Michel Franchy, not as might be expected the victim of some ill-judged gas grenade or baton blow unleashed by the riot police but, even more disturbingly, of himself. For Franchy committed suicide by hanging himself on the premises of the Lycée Magny-Cours, an 'agricultural high school', which means second-rate establishment for 'non-academic' pupils, set in a grim suburb on the fringe of this notoriously quiet Loire township whose innate melancholy was masterfully captured by Resnais in the flash-back sequences of *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*.

Franchy left a 13-page statement which testified, among other things, to his profound social despair. His suicide note, or '*auto-critique*' as some local activitists preferred to call it, painted a monochrome picture of his birthplace. Here was as melancholy a vision as that of Resnais, though sadly lacking the flair that might have provided a more hopeful escape route. The Lycée, seen through Franchy's disabused eyes, was 'a grey-corridored prison': its teachers, like all members of the older generation for that matter, were 'hypocrites who understood nothing and were beyond communicating with'. He found the provincial environs, devoted as they are to the rearing of Charolais herds and other culinary matters, 'mediocre' – a word that with *débile*, the French equivalent of the London comprehensive 'spastic', currently has a prominent place in the student vocabulary. Society, Franchy wrote, was everywhere full of injustice, and religion was simply trickery. 'Et enfin, il ne faut croire en rien' [*sic*] he concluded.

Although Franchy's death has certain elements about it – of which more below – that have a distinctive ring of 1976, it can of course be seen as part of a longish tradition of French provincial *chagrin*. In another age, most likely, it would have been to do with love, unrequited perhaps, or blocked by the hierarchies of class division. Certainly disillusion with society and its organisation as a whole would very probably have been an insufficient cause for a young man to resort to what Al Alvarez, after Yeats, has characterised as 'the savage God'.

The sense of provincial claustrophobia, so apparent in Franchy's attempt to explain why – one hesitates to use even so tepidly upbeat a phrase as 'farewell note' when discussing his jumbled, despairing jargon – has been implanted in French literature and life at least since Stendhal. Life, to use another word favoured by Franchy, is '*enformé*': turned in on itself so comprehensively that the sensitive provincial, hero of a thousand forgotten novels, is forced to 'climb up' to Paris.

Paradoxically, in an era of easy journeys, the geographical solution is probably less accessible now than it has ever been. Paris has been depopulated by speculation in office towers and accommodation for the bourgeoisie, which by English standards would mean the rich. The centre of Paris is not designed to accommodate young people without well-paid jobs. It is not only a virtually impossible journey from Nevers, it is equally inaccessible if your point of departure is a proletarian *arrondissement* like Belleville, or one of the '*alphaville*' suburbs which contain the office-and-service-industry workers in their cement towers.

It is popular, indeed virtually obligatory,

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to see French society at the moment in terms of what is called 'bipolarisation': Left and Right, order and movement, conservatism and anarchy. Those who make their protests manifest and those who brood in morose isolation. Poor Franchy, condemned to the last category, is yet another reminder of the division between parents and children. It is not simply the well-worn question of 'communication'. More, one suspects, the needs, as well as the tastes, of parents and their adolescent children are seen to be both separate and in conflict. A small residence in some kind of ersatz countryside, at least with a bit of greenery about, so delectable for the *bon père de famille*, and the apogee of a lifetime's industrious ambition, may seem like a desert of emptiness to the children he hopes will share his modest satisfactions. Adolescent suicide, evidently the most extreme expression of malaise, has increased by over 30 per cent in a decade, and the Government, not before time, has just instituted some research on the question.

The experts, we can be sure, will come up with conclusions to do with unemployment and alienation. The unsuitability of 'rigid structures' of education and jobs. But, risking a generalisation, it seems evident enough that France has for some time been in the process of changing both demographically and psychologically in a way that puts young people at a disadvantage. The adolescent no longer finds a society which assumes he is a kind of king simply by virtue of being in the jeans-wearing and record-buying age group. Those in the vanguard of the great 'baby boom', itself a historical memory in a period of zero population growth, are already, in some cases, within spitting distance of early middle age. 'Never trust anyone over 30,' wrote Jerry Rubin at the height of the youth culture, offering an awkward hostage to fortune and his own future (which turned out to be obscure).

General considerations of this kind, as opposed to specific questions of how far arts-degree courses should be geared to the needs of the computer industry, may go some way to explaining the unbeautiful desuetude into which French higher education has been drifting this year. There is a collective malaise among students which the Goverment's late and evidently largely cosmetic 'concessions' hardly affect. In some places strikes and disruptions are now into their fourth month, many lycées and universities, encouraged to accept these 'concessions', which the communist-dominated UNEF claim they have 'torn' from the inept Alice Saunier-Seïté, are back at work; others are still deciding.

Certainly the student protest has been swamped in the 'polarised' and unionised social conflict which continues, just as their militants were lost among the 150,000 adherents of the CGT and other mammoth unions who turned May Day into the biggest march that has been seen since the eve of the Popular Front victory in 1936, the 40th anniversary of which fell this week. The protest movement, despite its inordinate length and the millions of words it has spawned, has produced neither one memorable phrase nor a single leader, even of Rubinesque, gadfly weight. The nearest, I fear, is Michel Franchy, with his obscure 'militant suicide'.

A banal act committed against himself by a disturbed youth with only banal words to explain it, a local commentator thought. And yet it has stayed with me all week, more powerful than the thousands of words uttered in more sophisticated places like the Dauphine campus, known with Orwellian succinctness as Paris 10, or at *gauchiste* Nanterre, that bleak institution which punctuates the train-ride to the salubrious western suburbs like an unregenerate belch at a gourmet dinner party.

The image of the Nevers *copains* marching with their white banners is haunting. Was it the colour of surrender? A symbol of the emptiness of their present and future? Or were they simply, and understandably, at a loss to encapsulate their feelings in some pert slogan? Franchy has at any rate made some minor historical contribution. I wonder who can find a precedent for 2,000 young people in their prime expressing 'solidarity' with an act of self-destruction?

Paris

Christopher Hitchens

How to Stop a Revolution

The Portuguese still have a more electric May Day than any other European country. The celebration of recent liberty, the feeling that the worker need not grovel, the colour and anarchy of the city are (still) all of them present. But this year there was a definite lack of *élan*, a straining for enthusiasm as the disciplined trade union contingent marched in tens of thousands to one destination and the bright Red young paraded in thousands to another. Just a year ago, capital was fleeing from Lisbon in torrents and the argument was 'which kind of socialism will triumph?' Now the posters say 'no to the recuperation of capitalism', and the question is 'will it triumph at all?'.

Since Dr Kissinger is so worried about Italy, Spain, France, Greece, Turkey and Iceland as pressure points within the Western Alliance, it must be a relief to him that Portugal has opted for 1905 rather than 1917. The army has been professionalised again, a new military 'Intervention Group' has replaced the once-powerful and leftist-orientated Copcon, and surveillance of extremists is widespread. Unlike the heady days of last year, when a people's-power constitution was promulgated and the liberals exclaimed 'Now we have not even Albania to the Left of us!', the revolutionaries can no longer take their desires for reality. In fact they undid themselves by attempting to do just that. The Establishment can breathe again, and so can Nato. For future reference in troublesome cases of this kind, connoisseurs of counter-revolution should memorise the following points.

First, you must get the Left to believe its own propaganda. Nothing can be done if revolutionaries do not see 'power in the street, power in the local committee, power in the factory'. Syndicalism can be very exhausting. Get the extremists to concentrate on that, and the moderates to concentrate on the struggle within ministries, concentrate on the armed forces yourself, and half the battle is won. (The night before May Day tanks were to be seen in working-class areas around Lisbon, as the unsentimental army commanders made their own dispositions. And *Republica*, organ of workers' power in the press, did not denounce the fact for the excellent reason that it is now defunct.)

Second, you must get the Right to believe its own propaganda. Nothing can be done if businessmen, priests and lawyers do not see the end of civilisation as they know it, with mere anarchy loosed upon the world, obedience and decency flouted, uniformed paras openly fraternising with strikers and students. Meanwhile, demobilise the army units which give you trouble and create a new Intervention Group – this one had its officers trained in Britain. Four people were shot in Oporto in January by the new squad, and to the despair of all the press photographers, soldiers are now forbidden to wear the famous camouflage jackets when off duty.

Third, you need a bit of luck and something of a dirty tricks department. The arrival of resentful Angolan refugees – equivalent to six million Australians or Rhodesians decanted here – for fear of communism (and a war which you have helped to prolong) was in many ways an unlooked-for bonus. The fact that Communist and leftist parties are semi-clandestine now in the Azores and part of the north is, however, a tribute to hard work. If the men from Langley, Virginia, played any of the role attributed to them by the paranoid comrades it was in fanning that provincial flame. The economy can be left to take care of itself. Portugal has operated at such a disadvantage in its role as a stoker of the boilers of Europe that there is no need for any actual destabilisation. Investors do not need to be told to keep their money out of yards and factories where the Red flag flies. People swiftly start to associate scarcity with the revolution.

Fourth, you require your right-wingers to be moderates and your moderates to be right wing. This is an old story, and anybody who heard Caetano's one-time friend Freitas do Amaral, now head of the extreme-Right Centre Social Democrats, when he said that 'capitalism is dead in Portugal, it did not fulfil its historic function' will know how the exaggeration can work. The same logic can draw the leader of the liberal Popular Democrats, Francisco Sa Carneiro, to remark that Mario Soares leads a 'Marxist, collectivist party', when its whole electoral strategy was based on its claim to have the best relations with the EEC. Be

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careful with this tactic, because, as any enemy of Michael Foot will tell you, it is no good denouncing someone as Attila one day if you need to praise his statesmanlike qualities the next.

Finally, unless you are really prepared to embark on a direct coup you must hope for the Left to make the worst use of all the rope let out to it. In Portugal, the Left did. The crass semi-insurrection in November, when the Communist Party used and then dropped the ultra Left, cost Portuguese revolutionaries almost all their glittering prizes. During the curfew and crackdown which followed, the right-wing and traditional officers reasserted their lost control. Carvalho's Copcon is now disbanded. The Lisbon press is solidly centrist. The Right wing sails more and more under its own colours. A mandatory census of foreigners has been taken – to root out the young hopefuls who dreamed of doing here what they had failed to do in Paris – and although it found only a handful of irregulars it marked a total change of atmosphere. The old secret policemen are being released from prison, as are former fascist officers, but, since failed revolutionaries are being let out as part of the deal, there are no obvious grounds for complaints.

Currently, the legislative elections having been a stalemate, the main issue is presidential power. Leftists who scorned bourgeois voting two weeks ago are now anxiously haggling over a new strong man. It looks like General Ramalho Eanes, an apolitical law-and-order man with an undistinguished record. Mario Soares was saying last year that if military men were really democrats they would take off their uniforms. Now he says he will consider governing with them. And Alvaro Cunhal, fresh from hailing the USSR as 'the sun in our universe' in Moscow, is now all conciliation for the social democrats. And the currency reserve is all used up, unemployment is staggeringly high, right-wing bombs go off in Lisbon, and the leader of the conservatives points out unhappily that 'the Left has a majority in areas of national wealth'.

That is true enough; whereas the liberals and reformists have a larger vote, they don't know where it comes from. The Left are still secure in the atrociously poor and neglected working-class districts. The revolutionary wave may be ebbing, but it has left behind certain distinct landmarks, such as public ownership and the officially socialist character of the Constitution, which will not easily be eroded. The final showdown with the Left, if there is to be one, will have to be extremely hard fought. But, for the moment, if Portugal is not exactly quiet it has ceased to be the Red beacon of last year.

Lisbon

Tom Baistow

The Red-Coloured Supplements

The latest skirmish in the Sunday quality papers' circulation battle should remind all obituarists that the 81-year-old Lord Thomson must be credited not only with that spectacular communications breakthrough of the Fifties, the TV licence to print money, but also, such is the symmetry of all great pioneers' achievements, with the introduction of a sophisticated device for pouring it down the overloaded Fleet Street drain – the colour supplement.

I refer, of course, to the decision by Thomson's fellow peer, Lord Hartwell, to give away the *Telegraph* Magazine with the *Sunday Telegraph* instead of with the Friday edition of the daily, a move widely interpreted as a blow to help finish off the *Observer* now that the *S. Telegraph* has passed its circulation by 50,000. But things in Fleet Street are never as simple as the people who take the decisions. For a start, one should remember that any connection between the colour supplements and journalism is incidental: they are about ads. True, they became identified with the trendy ethos of the distant Swinging Sixties, but they were, and are, aimed at the customer not as a reader hungry for some latter-day *Picture Post* fare but as an A-B spender with Heals-Habitat-Sandersons-Jaguar tastes. They are, in short, more glossy versions of those 'free press' papers pushed through your letter-box without charge.

So any real critique of their place in Sunday journalism must start with accountancy. Thomson's idea was that the *Sunday Times* supplement would make a killing with women's magazine-type colour ads charged for at a premium rate much higher than the women's mags' because of the paper's more affluent readership. And, after launching losses of nearly £1m. in 1961, it did. So the *Observer*, having sneered editorially – and prophetically – at the Canadian upstart's latest stunt, pocketed its pride in 1964 and joined the Klondyke trail. By now even Hartwell had got the message. But so had the newsagents, fed up with the chore of humping these bulky extras on their Sunday rounds. So it was decided to issue the *Telegraph* supplement with the *DT*'s Friday edition and make a rather lame virtue of it by pretending that this was the 'week's top shopping day'. The magazine did boost the daily's sales by 60,000 on that one day but advertisers were less than keen because so many copies seemed to end up in commuter train racks instead of lying around the house as consumer bait, like the Sunday mags.

Which brings us back to the *Telegraph* move in September (still to be 'approved' by the National Federation of Retail Newspapers: a spokesman for the trade warned this week that 'this could be the straw that broke the camel's back'). The real surprise is not that the magazine is being shunted to Sunday but that it is being kept going. This is not a criticism of its editorial appeal, for largely because of its relative independence it has developed more of an identity than its rivals. But the bleak fact is that after the *ST*'s initial boom the March-hare economics – high-cost colour printing, total dependence on advertising revenue in a shrinking market, plus a distribution payment of ½p a copy to newsagents – have turned the supplements into loss-makers that are progressively weakening the parent papers' ability to cope with their real basic problems.

In the case of the *Telegraph* the magazine has only once made a profit, in 1973, a year when the three supplements' total ad revenue was £19.7m. Last year that total was down by nearly £2½m., with overheads still soaring. The two *Telegraphs*' joint annual loss is currently running at about £300,000 – the *S. Telegraph* with a deficit of £1m. and the magazine £¾m. in the red together wiping out the *DT*'s profit of £1½m. It is against these figures rather than the *Observer*'s difficulties that the *Telegraph*'s tactics must be seen. The first economy the *Telegraph* has made is to end the magazine's contract with Bemrose, Rupert Murdoch's Liverpool colour printing company, in favour of a very keen deal with the Odhams (Watford) division of Reed International, the Mirror Group's parent, which itself was threatened with closure last year after a crippling strike and was badly in need of more business.

Reducing the magazine's 'circulation' from 1.3 million on a Friday to 750,000 on a Sunday will mean a big saving on both printing and newsprint, which goes up by at least 10 per cent in price this month. This saving will be partly offset by a reduction in its ad rates from £3,650 for a full colour page to £2,750, but the *Telegraph*'s hope is that by thus undercutting the *Observer* rate of £2,950-£3,400 and offering advertisers a slightly bigger circulation it will eventually recoup as readers switch to the cheaper *S. Telegraph* – 12p to the *Observer*'s 15. This hope may turn out to be as naïve as some of the *Telegraph*'s views of the wider world. For one thing, if its belief that the *Observer* gives ad discounts of up to 50 per cent is true the *S. Telegraph* magazine may well fail to tempt advertisers away from such cut-price coverage of a younger readership, particularly if the *Observer*'s circulation recovery in the first quarter of this year continues.

For another, the papers are political poles apart and it is unlikely that many of the *Observer*'s liberal-inclined readers would change to a diet of the *S. Telegraph*'s Worsthornean high-camp Toryism for a saving of 3p. If price-plus-supplement is a draw – and newspaper-buying habits tend to defy logic – the 12p *S. Telegraph* would be more likely to win converts from the *Sunday Express*, which purveys a similar brand of pin-stripe politics and social attitudes at the same price, or even from the *Sunday Times* at 18p.

Further, the *S. Telegraph's* much-vaunted overtaking of the *Observer*'s circulation is much less impressive when viewed in its true perspective: the 106,000 slump in *Observer* sales in the second six months of

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1975 was brought on by its long-drawn-out showdown with the unions, over manning cuts, which cost the paper one week's issue and the confidence of many advertisers, which in turn led to the fewer-pages-fewer-readers spiral. Without such distractions, the *S. Telegraph* lost 30,000 sales over the same period.

At last, however, the *Observer*, while still dangerously under-capitalised, shows signs of getting out of the wood (although the ubiquitous Mr Jimmy Goldsmith is believed to be lurking among the trees in the hope that the Astor financial trust may yet sell out to save the family money). Under its new editor, Donald Trelford, the paper is recovering some of its former individualistic appeal despite a shoestring editorial budget. By moving into a more modest corner of the old Printing House Square complex it bought from Thomson, it now draws an income from the other accommodation that should cut back its deficit to some £200,000 a year and, eventually, wipe it out. And although its magazine's ad revenue is the lowest of the three (£4.4m. last year, compared with £7.9m. for the *ST* and £5.1m. for the *Telegraph*, according to Media Expenditure Analysis) the *Observer's* special tie-up with British Printing Corporation, who own a 50-per-cent stake in it and have pumped money in to keep their presses rolling for profit, enables the *Observer* to claim that, technically at least, it breaks even. In fact, however, it is a costly distraction for a paper that has enough serious problems to worry about.

Ironically, the trail blazer itself, the *Sunday Times* supplement, looks like slipping even deeper into the red although it still leads in paging and revenue. Last year it lost £200,000 of Times Newspapers' £1.6m. deficit (a figure that doesn't include Thomson's personal loss of £1.5m. on *The Times*), and by the end of March this year the loss was already £210,000. The geese that were to have laid the golden eggs have turned out to be albatrosses. It is a measure of Fleet Street's fatal preoccupation with, and delusions about, 'competition' that the three proprietors cannot agree to throw them overboard and concentrate on the real task of making their newspapers economically sound.

Roger Woddis

Salute for a President

Welcome to these shores, Ernesto,
Come and join the Royal binge;
Never mind the demonstrators,
They are just the loony fringe,
Disaffected rentamobsters,
Underlings in someone's pay:
When you hear them shouting slogans,
Smile and look the other way.

Every country has its defects,
Even, dare we say, Brazil;
Opposition notwithstanding,
Be assured we love you still.
Make yourself at home, dear fellow,
Treat our country as your own,
Ask for anything you fancy,
(Provided it is not a loan).

We are rather good at railways,
We could let you have some steel
In exchange for nuts and coffee:
Surely we can do a deal.
How about a trip to Stratford?
Visit any place you choose;
They'd adore you in Northampton,
Where they wear Brazilian shoes.

Criticism isn't cricket,
Knocking you just isn't done:
Many countries are repressive,
Yours is not the only one.
But you are a true professional
And at least have won your spurs;
As to systematic torture,
Others are mere amateurs.

Tom Forester

Tech Fodder

It was an intimate kind of place. The Deputy Principal approached me one morning in the staff car park and gave me a right ticking off. 'Students,' he said, were not allowed to park there. I explained that I'd been a part-time lecturer for the past 15 months, and was therefore entitled to use the staff car park. It was, of course, the first time we'd met, and I never did get to meet the Principal himself, although I regularly studied *their* latest saloon models, which were always parked in the specially reserved places right in front of the main entrance.

From the outside, Borchester Technical College looked rather like a modern factory and, in a sense, it was one. On the inside, the discipline and hierarchies, I should imagine, are much the same. At the tech, status was determined by salary, size of office, number of secretaries, and lack of teaching. By and large, those who did most teaching got paid less, while those who did no teaching at all got huge (post-Houghton) salaries.

In fact the Iron Law of Sinecures applies to the whole education system, as it does elsewhere: those in the most difficult jobs like primary school teaching get paid badly. Those in more pleasant places like universities get paid too well, and they have all the advantages of high status, security of tenure, and intellectual autonomy (although even they have now been surpassed, in salaries, by the new polytechnic elite). The poor part-time tech lecturer has none of these things.

The further-education sector also lacks many things that higher education institutions enjoy. At Borchester Tech, the library was tiny and poorly stocked. Likewise, the bookshop. The refectory, a hut away from the main building, was noisier and dirtier than most factory canteens. The staff common room was far worse than student common rooms at the nearby university. Adult students had nowhere quiet to meet, and last year, money was so short that students had to buy their own textbooks. Given this kind of environment, serious study is not easy, and the O- and A-level results of most further education institutions bear this out. Schools, traditionally, do much better.

Judging by the problems faced by the part-time tech teacher it is not difficult to see why. I was expected to take 48 students in three groups up to O-level in sociology in one year. But weekly contact time for each group – including 15 adult students – was only about two and a half hours, so it proved impossible to give the kind of individual attention and counselling that was required. In the case of some students, young and old – like Ron, an intelligent warehouseman who could barely read or write – a course in spelling and written English was clearly required, but nobody seemed bothered. When an adult student dropped out through family pressures or work difficulties, his or her name was quietly scrubbed from the register – and another once-in-a-lifetime attempt at self-improvement was aborted. I was fortunate, but the drop-out rate among adult students on many tech courses – particularly among working-class students – was phenomenal. On the whole, it was the middle-class housewives who survived.

Now I've always been struck by the political illiteracy of much of the electorate – it shows up, for instance, in the current affairs questions on the *Sale of the Century* and at the end of the *Generation Game* – but the political ignorance of my 16-year-old sociology students was apalling. Oblivious of world events, profoundly cynical and uninterested in anything to do with political affairs, they were apathetic and proud of it – militant apathetics, if you like. In one class, only two pupils out of 14 knew the date of the Russian revolution. Four had not even *heard* of Mao Tse-tung ('It's a kind of food, isn't it?').

When asked for a topical example of religious conflict, a few mentioned Ulster, but the Lebanon, apparently, did not exist (even though it had been a major item on the TV news the night before). As to domestic matters, 70 per cent of the class agreed that 'the trade unions are ruining the country', but less than half could correctly name one. Most of tomorrow's electors couldn't care less about voting, but almost all intended to vote exactly as their parents. Faced with this kind of conditioning, the tech teacher is virtually impotent. He or she has come along too late.

Recent educational research has suggested that social inequality begins and ends in the home, and that the educational system itself can't do much to overcome class and educational inequalities. Borchester Tech certainly doesn't.

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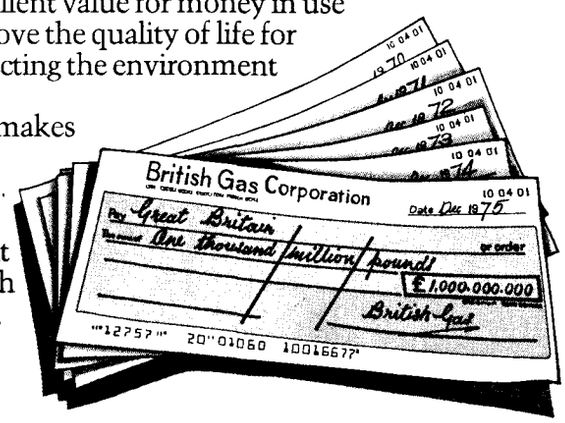

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Andrew Wilson*

The Concorde Tragi-Comedy

A book just out by a director of the British Aircraft Corporation contains a passage that goes to the heart of the Concorde controversy.** The fact that it concerns myself and the *Observer* is incidental. It could as well have been written about a score of people who have argued against Concorde more diligently and expertly, such as Bo Lundberg in Sweden or Richard Wiggs of the British Anti-Concorde Project.

'I have never been able to fathom Andrew Wilson's attitude to Concorde,' says the author, Geoffrey Knight. 'It is hard to single out his objections because he operates over the whole spectrum. If they are environmental, it is difficult to discover which he considers substantial, because he covers the lot. Does he consider that the airplane is uneconomic, that the country cannot afford to spend this sort of money? Nobody knows because he attacks right across the whole front . . .'

This seems to confirm what I have always suspected – that those who support Concorde from the industry side have never understood the moral and political basis of most of their opponents' objections, whereas we on our side can claim, I think, to have some idea of what Concorde means to those who have built it.

Let me state my own understanding of the 'plus' side of Concorde, and its defenders can tell me if I have left anything out.

Concorde is a considerable technical achievement. Its delta-shaped wing; its supersonic engines; its systems for sustaining life at altitudes where exposure to the outside atmosphere would kill its occupants in four seconds – all these things are as impressive, technologically, as parts of the American space programme.

It is also a beautiful aeroplane, if the description can be applied to its visual and not its acoustic aspect, and would provide us with a socially acceptable convenience if it were possible to fly to America in under four hours at reasonable cost and without environmental penalties.

Finally, with Concorde, as with other advanced technological programmes, there are bound to be spin-offs of value to the development of other products – though most of those credited to Concorde appear to relate to further supersonic aircraft, whose environmental and cost problems remain unsolved.

If the critics of Concorde have not constantly qualified their criticism of Concorde by referring to these 'positive aspects' (a complaint by Mr Knight) it is because, once stated, they are sufficiently obvious. And they have been not only stated but laboured ad nauseam by most of the British media – that is to say, the *Daily Express*, the *Sunday Express*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail*, *The Times* (notwithstanding Bernard Levin's column) and the BBC. Especially the BBC.

The BBC's very interesting line on Concorde began in the mid-1960s when it dropped appearances by Mary Goldring after protests from the aircraft industry. There was then a period when criticism was permitted on steam radio but not on the box. Finally, when the chips were down in the fight by American environmentalists to keep Concorde out of Washington and New York, criticism went off radio as well. Officials assure one that there is no pro-Concorde directive at the BBC. Yet producers on *Panorama* have admitted more than once how nearly impossible it has been to get approval for an objective programme.

Three months ago, after the US environmental hearings in Washington, *Panorama* did take the plunge and broadcast what was, by previous standards, a commendably fair programme. The night before transmission someone entered the cutting room and removed two minutes of material which contradicted the pro-Concorde testimony of the Aerospace Minister, Gerald Kaufman.

But to come back to what I have called the heart of the matter – the conflict between different sets of values in our society, in which Concorde has become a battleground – what astounds me is that there are also people in the Labour movement who, like Mr Knight, fail to understand how Concorde critics can 'attack right across the whole front'. Indeed so total is their blindness to the issues at stake that, like the industrialists, they look for all kinds of explanations – personal animosity, 'technophobia', even subsidisation by American industry – rather than face the fact that the critics fight against Concorde because it is wrong.

Critics of Concorde may sometimes seem to fall into two categories: those who criticise it on environmental grounds, and those who do so on economic. But the two kinds of criticism are inseparable, since the only way to make Concorde less noxious is to make it even more catastrophically uneconomic, and vice versa. The environmental argument began in 1961 over the question of the sonic boom. Anyone who thinks, after reading Mr Knight, that the question of the boom is settled because most countries are agreed that Concorde should not be permitted to operate supersonically over populated land areas must be very naïve. The boom, it should be remembered, is an extremely loud clap, capable in normal circumstances of waking a person up, causing a construction worker to fall off a building, or jarring a surgeon's knife. In abnormal circumstances, which occur frequently, it can be increased to a 'super boom' by weather and ground conditions. Hence the panic of the unfortunate people of the Canary Islands last month when they were accidentally overflown by an Air France Concorde on its way to South America.

A question concerning the boom which should be activating socialist consciences at the moment is whether British Airways should be allowed to press for permission to overfly supersonically the southern half of India. Unless it gets what it wants, the airline will have to reroute its Australia-bound Concorde with 37 seats blocked off to save fuel. The Government is now doing all in its power to cajole Mrs Gandhi into subjecting tens of millions to a sonic boom at night time. Clearly some British ministers are worried at the colonialist implications of this move: but – such is Concorde's ability to trap Labour ministers who are foolish enough to think they can ride it – that the Government's answer has not been to desist from this foolish and immoral pressure but to issue a statement through the former Environment Minister, Tony Crosland, that sonic booms over Britain cannot be ruled out.

A similarly 'colonialist' attitude, not entirely appropriate to bicentennial year, was evident on the British side during the Washington environment hearings when the Foreign Office let it be known that the exclusion of Concorde on environmental grounds would be regarded as discrimination, and that there could be retaliation against American aircraft by British unions. Certainly the hearings, which were mainly concerned with ground noise and atmospheric pollution, made the Labour government some strange bed-fellows, including Senator Barry Goldwater and a line of Texas tycoons seeking supersonic publicity for Dallas and Fort Worth – and some strange enemies, including millions of young Americans seeking a new pattern of social and environmental responsibility.

At the hearings Gerald Kaufman, primed with all the old claptrap of the Concorde sales team in a two-week crash course, told William Coleman, the Secretary of Transportation, that Concorde was no noiser than many of the older subsonic jets. Now, this statement is just not true. It was proved so before the hearings by US government measurements and again, afterwards, by measurements by the Greater London Council and other local authorities, which showed that Concorde was at least four times as noisy as the oldest and noisiest Boeing 707. Nobody should suppose that because Coleman (under pressure from Henry Kissinger, who wanted an Anglo-

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**Concorde, The Inside Story by GEOFFREY KNIGHT *Weidenfeld and Nicolson* £4.95

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French quid pro quo) finally gave permission for a limited Concorde service to Washington and New York, the Americans were taken in. The permission is strictly conditional, can be revoked at any time, and in the case of New York may not even operate, because of local opposition.

The other major argument in Washington was over Concorde's effect on the upper atmosphere. Now, this is a matter about which, in all honesty, there is considerable doubt. Yet the Government's refusal to give it serious study is quite hair-raising. The facts which are not contested are these: kerosene-burning jet engines emit nitrogen oxides which at Concorde's cruising altitude can damage the ozone layer that protects us from ultra-violet radiation from the sun – and too much ultra-violet causes non-melanomic (i.e. non-fatal) skin cancer. What is debatable is how many Concordes or other very high-flying planes are needed to produce a measurable increase in the incidence of skin cancer. The US environmental impact statement suggested that 16 Concordes world-wide could cause 1,200 cases in America annually. The American Academy of Sciences suggested a higher figure. The effect would be felt everywhere, because damage to the ozone layer is global.

Secrecy Over Costs

Coleman made it a condition of his permission (for four flights a day to New York and two to Washington) that the high-level effect of these flights should be monitored. One cannot quarrel with that part of his ruling. But what historians may one day note is that the ozone question was never once debated by Parliament, and that when it came to the point the British Government determined to go ahead with Concorde regardless of the risk.

The conspiracy of silence over the environmental problems of Concorde was, of course, maintained over the economic problems also. Mr Knight's book, which is very articulate, goes some way towards explaining how the costs of the development programme came to escalate from £170m. in 1962 to the current £1,200m. A single production line could have saved £300m., he claims; but because of pride and chauvinism there had to be two lines, one at Bristol as well as Toulouse.

Clearly Concorde could have been built for less than it has been. But we should also beware of the idea that the only thing wrong with Concorde was slack supervision at Bristol and Anglo-French frictions at the start of the collaborative programme – or simply the cost-plus system, which gives the contractors a profit on each overrun. The real reason for Concorde's spiralling development costs was secrecy. When six years ago I asked Julian Amery (the minister responsible for Concorde's inception) how the Tory Government could have swallowed the 1962 estimate of £150-170m., he was quite frank. 'Nobody could have given a significant figure for an unknown venture,' he said. 'We simply had to get the thing started.'

There was never any informed debate in Parliament about these matters, for the simple reason that Parliament was never given the facts. Public Expenditure Committees occasionally extracted a fact or two, but when it came to informing the House as a whole the committees were hamstrung by the censoring of their reports 'for commercial security'. The climax of the ridiculous was the 1972-73 report, full of blanks and asterisks, quoted in these columns recently by Jeremy Bugler. What those asterisks hid was the figures which Tony Benn felt obliged to give Parliament in 1974 – that the *production* loss on 16 Concordes would be £300m., and that thereafter every Concorde sold – if any *were* sold – would still cost more money than we would get for it.

One of the more interesting substitutes for a parliamentary debate was Edward Heath's use of the new Whitehall 'think tank'. Instead of publishing the figures, Heath, who was fairly ignorant about Concorde when he took office, asked Lord Rothschild and his 'young men' to do an analysis. After a six-week study, which in the light of later developments must have left some sizeable stones unturned, they recommended that the project should go on. Knight tells how Rothschild arranged a small 'lark' for the cabinet. With each copy of his report on the cabinet table was a gift from BAC – a Concorde tie, and for Margaret Thatcher a Concorde headscarf 'by Hermes of Paris' from Aerospatiale.

The hoodwinking of the public over Concorde's development costs is now, one hopes, history; it has been replaced by hoodwinking over British Airways operating costs for the plane. These threaten to be quite as disastrous as the former chairman, David Nicolson, predicted in a confidential paper (which he was horrified to see made public by the Department of Trade) in 1964. The paper forecast an annual loss of £25m. on five planes in 'normal circumstances', or £40m. if things went badly.

Since Concorde services started to Bahrain in February, payloads, boosted by offers of cut-price accommodation, have averaged 45 passengers a trip – in a plane designed for 108. A few weeks ago the corporation's chief executive, Henry Marking, said this meant that Concorde was losing only £800 per flight. But to anyone familiar with Concorde's performance this simply didn't add up. On being pressed, British Airways admitted that Marking's figure took no account of depreciation, a share of overheads, or indeed of other items that are usually part of an operating figure. A spokesman admitted finally that all it represented was 'the difference between what it cost to fly the plane, when offset by fare revenues, compared with what it would have cost to leave it on the ground'.

No doubt when Concorde begins services to Washington later this month figures will be produced to show that the losses are not as bad as was expected. And if the plane gets into New York, over the dead bodies of half a million noise-stricken dwellers in the vicinity of Kennedy Airport, it may even be shown that it appears to make a profit. But Labour MPs at least should be wise as to what this means. British Airways (and Air France) operating costs are based on a purchase price far below that asked of other customers for Concorde, and of course far below the real production cost. This means that no commercial airline is going to take the remaining five unsold Concordes unless they are literally given away – and perhaps not then, because a world fleet of only 16 planes is liable to become unviable from the spares point of view.

The Social Question

There is a tendency to talk of Concorde's economics as if it were a purely business matter, or at worst a colossal accounting scandal. In fact, it is a far-reaching social question. It is also a question of what Concorde has done to the civil side of the aircraft industry. It has, in fact, all but ruined it, soaking up funds and making it impossible to provide government backing for projects such as the European Airbus and the BAC 3-111, which would have stood us well in this high-cost fuel era when airlines are looking for ways to cut their costs.

Another serious social matter is what Concorde is doing – or would do, if allowed – to the prospects of ordinary air travellers who cannot pay first class fares and a 20-per-cent supersonic surcharge. Unless Concorde airlines were subsidised, like British Airways, they would be bound to pass on their supersonic losses to their subsonic services, which because of the IATA price-fixing mechanism could only mean higher economy fares for everybody. In addition, airlines flying Concorde would dearly like preferential air traffic control treatment.

The effect, in short, would be to turn ordinary travellers – frequently referred to by Concorde salesmen as 'the buckets and spades brigade' – into very third-rate citizens indeed. At the same time, they would be told that for those who used Concorde, time was money, and that their supercharged fares were helping to sustain the economy. But just a minute. Would it be *their* money? Can anyone pretend that any business traveller buys a Concorde ticket out of his own pocket, or even that of his firm? Of course not. Surcharged fares for Concorde must ultimately be paid, with rare exceptions, from the pockets of consumers.

All this should give thought to a Labour government, or indeed to any kind of

The 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act staggers to a century in August . . . it governs animal experimentation without defining pain or experiment . . . British laboratories use 5½ million living animals yearly—2/3rds for non-medical profit . . . humane alternatives to animals exist . . . this Victorian Act hinders their development . . . blunts compassion . . . shames Britain.

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government proclaiming its concern with the quality of the environment, the efficient allocation of resources and the welfare of all its citizens. Now is the time, with the last unwanted Concordes nearing completion, to admit the mistakes and abandon dishonest and incongruous postures. Concorde will no doubt remain in rarefied service for a number of years, like a supersonic Hindenburg. But like the great German airship it will go down in history as the way not to do things.

Kingsley Amis

Words and Meanings

As ever, Fowler had a phrase for it: 'bastard enumeration'. (See under AND in *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*: not holy writ but required reading.) Here is an almost irreducibly simple example:

> Zee is 21, pretty and has a 37in. bust.

The syntactical hiccup here is probably the result of a fancied rule, dimly or unconsciously recalled, to the effect that any sort of list must have an *and* between the last two items and nowhere else. And it's true that, unlike some other languages (Latin, for instance), English arranges its lists after the pattern of 'lions, tigers and bears' rather than either 'lions and tigers and bears' or 'lions, tigers, bears'. The rub comes when the writer mistakes two or more lists for a single one. So here we have, wrapped up together, two lists of two items each, list A consisting of Zee is 21 + Zee is pretty, and list B of list A + Zee has a 37in. bust. Either reduce to one list of three ('Zee is 21, pretty and 37 ins. round the bust'), or better, present clearly as two lists ('Zee is 21 and pretty and has a 37in. bust').

That is, of course, if you can be bothered. The original example can hardly produce any worse effect than a grunt of annoyance or amusement; there is no possibility of confusion and no delay in sorting things out. That's largely because the units, the items on the lists, are short. But before I go on let me, for personal satisfaction, give two examples showing that list-trouble is by no means confined to the downward end of the market.

> The new *Who's Who* has 2,500 pages, over 26,000 entries, weighs 5½ lbs and costs £18. [From the NEW STATESMAN.]
>
> During the time the couple were based in Vermont there were trips to Bermuda and England, a stay in Washington, and Kipling visited Gloucester, Mass. [From a recent book.]

When the units (as I was saying) are of some length, what I called in my last article a moment of pointless puzzlement is likely:

> Arafat threatened Israel with suspension from the United Nations, accused her of terrorism against her Arab population and against Lebanon, and of responsibility for every kind of crime.

Having got to the end of that, the more attentive or more pedantic kind of reader plods back to somewhere about the first comma in order to assure himself that the fault actually is in the text, not in his own powers of perception, and goes on to the next sentence with a slight diminution of willingness. Some other kinds of reader, without being able to account for it, will also feel that diminution. This is the penalty of the you-get-what-I-mean approach to writing English. It isn't that it's wrong or bad grammar or that it breaks a rule to write:

> Too many people in Britain today are badly paid, poorly housed and cared for;

it's that a number of readers will go 'Uh?' when they see it and, if they come across more of the same, are likely to find something better to do, unless they happened to be very interested in the subject before they started. Those who feel that the subject of poverty (or anything else) is important have always been best advised to treat it, not as so important that questions of style and such are too academic and finicky to be bothered with, but as so important that absolutely everything possible must be done to present it clearly and attractively, and that very much includes never making the reader go 'Uh?'

In some cases of bastard enumeration, the fault is not so readily definable and that moment of puzzlement prolonged:

> The employers' benefits include the ability to survive through the eighties [evidently the 1980s, not the employers' 80s], a good reputation among potential recruits, existing staff and through the relevant industry and its unions.

This time, the omissions of *and* after *eighties* and – almost beyond belief – after *recruits* combine nicely with the frown-engendering properties of the second *through* used – I suppose – in the sense of *throughout*. There lingers a vague suspicion that what has gone wrong concerns the typist or the printer rather than the writer. In the next example, which is up-market with a vengeance, such a suspicion may seem more specific:

> Frank was a fair rather short boy, with light hair, grey eyes, and usually peaceable and amiable in his behaviour. [A. C. Swinburne, 1862.]

Has some word like *qualities* or *tendencies* fallen out after *amiable*? Probably not, but. . .

I have perhaps said enough to suggest that *and* is a difficult, dangerous word. Its subversive powers are multiplied when *or* enters the reckoning:

> Most tables at the luncheon were supplied with carafes of wine or beer and gin and tonic. [From *The Times*.]

Carafes of beer? No. Carafes of beer-and-gin-and-tonic? Of course not. A comma after *wine* and *with* after *or* would cure that, but in doing so introduce an emphatic break that shifts the writer's presumable implication, that the chaps rather tended to stick either to wine or to beer-and/or-gin-and-tonic, to something nearer 'Which are you taking, sir: wine, or beer and gin-and-tonic?' I can see no obvious way out. Safer to give up the grape-versus-grain nuance and offer 'beer, gin-and-tonic and carafes of wine'.

Finally, an example of a different form of list-trouble, one not involving legerdemain with *and* but giving the reader that authentic sensation of missing the stair in the dark:

> We must see to it that every child entering secondary school knows how to read easily, write legibly, spell correctly, add up and to express himself or herself in good clear English. [The shadow Education spokesman.]

Diané Collinson and Larry Drake individually take me to task (Letters 26 March) for having quoted approvingly a sentence about the failure of some recent Soviet protests 'to refute any of Mrs Thatcher's facts'. A fact is a fact, they say, something that is the case or is certainly known to have occurred, and as such can never be refuted. Yes, but in some contexts it's not a fact at all. As sense 5 the *OED* gives: 'Often loosely used for: Something that is alleged to be, or conceivably might be, a "fact",' and goes on to quote as a 'modern' usage – i.e. one so regarded near the end of the last century – 'The writer's facts are far from trustworthy.' Surely we have all on occasion shouted, and had shouted at us, 'Get your facts right' or 'straight', without the slightest chance of even momentary misunderstanding?

I did my best to laugh when, having knocked out 600 trenchant words in these pages telling people not to use *refute* when they meant *deny*, I came across a letter in the NS of the very next week in which someone used *refute* when she meant *deny*. someone who had clearly read parts, at least, of the preceding issue. These days I often think they're doing it on purpose.

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London Diary

☐ Mr Wilson – I beg his pardon, Sir Harold – proudly tells, in what I suppose we must now regard as the first volume of his memoirs, how he decided in 1964 to put an end to the system of purely *political* honours. Having described how his very first Honours List in January 1965 was 'welcomed by the press', he goes on to explain that 'life peerages then and subsequently were based not only on the test of distinction but on that of having something of importance to say in the national forum which the House of Lords provides'. They were, he writes, awarded 'not as a reward for past services but as an opportunity to do a job of work'. Almost one might conclude an echo of R. H. Tawney, with his dictum: 'No Labour government shall confer any honours except such as are essential in order to enable it to do the job for which it was given power.' But if that was the principle, how about the practice? The truth, I fear, is that Wilson had summarily abandoned his own advertised yard-stick long before the present row over his Resignation Honours List came along. There is, I'm told, a total roll call of over 100 peers created by Harold Wilson. It would be illuminating to discover just how many of them – and which ones – have met his original 'Parker Morris standards'. I am confident the results would show that if *political* honours are bad, then *personal* ones are a great deal worse.

☐ My contribution to the bicentennial celebrations will be to compare Mr Justice Wien's decision to punish *Private Eye* for its choice of words with the recent ruling of the US Supreme Court that English criminal libel traduces the Bill of Rights and has no place in a civilised system of law. The court reasoned that 'a function of free speech under our system of government is to invite dispute. It may indeed best serve its high purpose when it induces a condition of unrest, creates dissatisfaction with conditions as they are, or even stirs people to anger . . . to make an offence of conduct which is "calculated to create disturbance of the peace" leaves wide open the standard of response. It involves calculations as to the boiling point of a particular person or a particular group, not an appraisal of the comments *per se*. This kind of criminal libel makes a man a criminal simply because his neighbours have no self-control.' This reasoning is surely unanswerable, whether the likelihood of a breach of the peace is an element of the offence or not. The judgment is a tribute to a society which does not permit wealthy but intemperate public figures to brandish the criminal law to silence their critics.

☐ As an Irishman, with more than a touch of the poet in him, Hugh Delargy would have appreciated the symmetry of his own death. Last Monday night he was, for the first time in many years, the star of a major debate in the House of Commons: a few hours later, accompanied by his old friend, Michael Foot, he was being borne away to hospital in an ambulance – and by lunchtime he was dead. I had known Hugh ever since we worked together on *Reynolds News* nearly two decades ago. He was (as readers of his De Valera obituary in the NS last September will hardly need reminding) a top-class journalist – and he had (as I always used to irritate him by telling him) at least the potential to be a front-rank politician as well. As it was, however, he preferred – at least after his hero, Nye Bevan, died – to reserve his energies for occasional excursions, and was content, in Adlai Stevenson's phrase, to 'sit in the shade with a glass of wine in his hands just watching the people dance'.

☐ I see that Barclays Bank has now decided to charge 10p on each cheque transaction for all the nasty proles whose accounts fall under £100 *in the black* – some 40 per cent of their clients. No doubt other English clearing banks will follow suit. But some help is at hand – the Scottish banks have said they will refuse to follow this iniquitous example. So perhaps we should all transfer to the Bank of Scotland, which has plenty of English branches, nice cards, and yellow cheques with views of Scotland on them. The English banks appear to be suffering from a severe attack of Post Office disease. If you aren't rich, don't bother us with your custom. Then, naturally, we shall have to increase the charges again. To cover costs.

☐ Alastair Burnet has been ticked off by the Press Council for publishing a grossly false lead story that the Home Secretary had ordered the police to drop all conspiracy charges against terrorists. Burnet's defence was that his reporter, Colin Pratt, had based the article on 'sources that have always been reliable', namely two senior police officers. In his book *Reluctant Judas* Geoff Robertson describes how a false story was planted in the *Daily Express* which endangered the life of an innocent woman in order to protect the cover of the spy Kenneth Lennon. The reporter on that occasion was also Colin Pratt. His source? You guessed it. Two senior police officers.

☐ A two-year absence from the live show has not lost David Bowie any of his fans. Monday night at the Empire Pool found them all, still, very loyal and rapturous. The boy himself has sobered up a good deal – there was no sexual teasing of the audience and the band as in days of yore – and the dress was as plain as plain could be. The anti-fascists didn't show up, and as a rally for a future dictator the Wembley surroundings are not as propitious as once Olympia was for Sir Oswald. And although Bowie's appeal is hysterical in its way, it has none of the heavy and dark undertones of some of his rivals (notably the Rolling Stones). I wish he hadn't made such a flip remark, and in Germany of all places, but it seems to have been a joke and certainly the masses of brightly coloured young people at the concert would make very poor *squadristi*. For that, and for the song *Station to Station*, many thanks.

☐ There has been the foreseeable Reds-under-the-bed flavour in comment on the Soviet Embassy's plans to redevelop four acres of Kensington, hard by the High Street. 'Soviet Expansion in Kensington' was *The Times*'s headline: the leader-writer then, however, rightly pointed out that (a) it would be a shame to change the nature of Millionaires' Row and (b) difficult, though, to stop it happening, since most of the area involved belongs to the Crown Estates Commissioners. But 18 months ago, in a local council planning report dated 1974, Kensington's own part of the area was already designated as 'primary and soft'. Such sites, it seems, are 'likely to change at an early date due to their proximity to the commercial area'. This was presumably a reference to the National Car Park, which has been an eyesore and a crying shame for years. But *Soviet* redevelopment? Kensington Council, we are told, now has 'reservations'. Since it is unlikely that the Russian Embassy will not pay the full commercial price (or more), I can only assume that the burghers of Kensington are worried about the creation of another example of Stalinist 'brutalism' – like the Czech Trade Centre that already stands in the Bayswater Road. But it could, I suppose, simply be that our old friend, Sir Malby Crofton, does not relish the prospect of being beholden to communists for so large a slice of Kensington's rates.

☐ One tale going the rounds at Westminster reveals a good deal not so much about the insolence, as the protection, of office. The other night Mr Edward Short, late Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons, was to be seen trudging up the length of Whitehall. A bus hove into view and Mr Short, for a man of 63, made a creditable dash for it – eventually catching up with it at the lights. Alas, it turned out to be one of the ultra-modern sort with automatic (but still at times relentless) doors. As the lights changed, and the bus sailed away into the night, Mr Short – an office holder for these past 25 months – had an expression not so much of resentment as of total bewilderment spread all over his face.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £1.50 book token for first entry, £1 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ The high cost of living in London is driving members of the aristocracy out of town, and many are being forced to live in their country houses or even Kingston and Surbiton. These unpalatable facts of life emerged during the preparation of the latest edition of *Debrett*, the definitive guide to the peerage published today. – *Daily Telegraph* (James Ewart)

☐ An additional Employment officer is being appointed in Nottinghamshire to help cope with unemployment, particularly among young people. Members of the County's Further Education Sub-Committee heard last week that the appointment is 100-per-cent grant aided by the Department of Employment. – *Retford Times* (A. G. Massey)

☐ Rising prices, high mortgages and the falling pound can ruin a man's sex life, according to Mr Maurice Yaffé, clinical psychologist at Guy's Hospital. – *Financial Times* (E. G. Breeze)

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Barbara Burge

On the Doorstep

'Mr Ridgeon?'

'Pidgeon.'

'What? Oh yes. . . er, sorry. A mark on the card, Mr Pidgeon. Er –' I look at him, a cost accountant mortgaged up to his hornrims, dressed in a Marks and Spencers towelling kimono and nothing else, judging by the hairy legs protruding. Perhaps 10.30 on a Sunday is a bit early to start. Must have a word with Bob . . . God, it's only 9.30 really, and he's not had his breakfast and there's this daft woman on the doorstep calling him 'Ridgeon'. He probably thinks I'm a Jehovah's Witness.

While this sequence of thoughts trails through my mind I am standing paralysed, my mouth open, my last resonant 'er' still hanging in the air between us. He glances at his wrist, which is naked, his watch is still on the bedside table, and draws in his breath sharply. I have forgotten my spiel. All this Ridgeon/Pidgeon business. What am I standing here for when there are clean sheets to be put on four beds and the *Sunday Times* to read?

'Er, my name's Barbara Burge.' Look him in the eye. Dare him to look away first. Now we know each other's names, all fair and above board.

'I'm standing for the council in the May elections.'

'May elections? First I've heard.'

'Yes that's right. For the council, you know. I'm standing for the Labour Party.'

It's a subtle change, nothing overt. At first it was just irritation, now it's hostility. The magic words are 'Labour Party', guaranteed to lose friends and fail to influence people – certainly in the cost accountant 95-per-cent mortgage four-bedroom detached belt. Why do we bother to canvass here anyway? All very well for Bob to say 'Let's get the worst areas over first', but at this rate my spirit will be crushed before we reach the best areas.

'Can we rely on your support?'

'I shall certainly be voting.'

Oh yes. He'll be voting all right. Liberal at a guess. It only stirs them up, this Sunday morning canvassing.

'But you'd rather not say for whom?'

A gleam comes into the hornrims. 'Put me down as Private.'

'We don't actually have a category like that' I say, putting a tick in the 'against' column. 'And what about Mrs Ridg-Pidgeon? Is she Private too?'

'I couldn't possibly speak for my wife. And now if you'll excuse me. . .'

I put another tick under all the rest. 'Thank you.' I smile ironically, just to show him he hasn't put me down, and march up the long path on to the estate road. This is a small, very select development. The road is lined with huge conker trees which were here long before the houses. I remember when this hill was just conker trees and elder scrub with a few brambles, and this lot of cost accountants, salesmen, garage proprietors and import/export dealers were trying to scrape together deposits. A pox on the lot of them. I don't know which I hate more, the bright wives whose smiles remain resolute even with the words 'Labour Party' still ringing in their ears, or the husbands who look as if for two pins they'd give me the bum's rush off the premises. The very worst thing is the smug assumption that a vote is a state secret. If only they'd just say 'No'.

Still it's a beautiful morning, cold and sunny, just right for canvassing, which is liable to work up a temperature. A wren hops furtively into a hawthorn hedge. Arthur is trudging along the road towards the Manor House. It was nasty of me to give him that card, I wouldn't canvass Colonel Knight for a pension. But I'm paying for it – doing the Chestnuts is almost as bad. At least you don't get equivocation from Colonel Knight.

What about this one? Sanderson curtains, Jaguar in the gravel drive, tubs of camellias. They are mercifully quick. I have hopes of the next, having staked it out over many months. The net curtains are dingy, the back garden, the largest in the Chestnuts, is still given over to elder scrub and brambles. The husband is out there now, trying to make some impression with a motor mower.

'Mrs Markham?'

'Yes.' She's a pleasant looking woman. Not bright and Tupperwary like the rest.

'My name's Barbara Burge.' Swiftly to the end. 'Can we rely on your support?'

'Yes.' I stagger back and trip over the step, smiling incredulously.

'Jolly good! And what about Mr Markham?'

'Oh yes, we'll both be there.'

'Smashing, lovely. Thanks very much.' I back away grinning, anxious not to appear too grateful. Nothing so prone to provoke second thoughts as fulsome gratitude. It's a Pyrrhic victory, nine houses full of straight 'noes', some of them so incensed by this assault on their sacred private votes that they'll march down to the school on polling day in protest. Nice to finish the Chestnuts with a surprise, though.

I started this morning with May Tree Close, a row of six old people's bungalows. I did it deliberately to give myself a boost to carry me through the Chestnuts. Old people in these bungalows are usually grateful to the Labour council, which is as it should be. It's a very good council. The first old lady wears a pink felt hat and wrap-around pinny. Her porch is a repository for coal scuttles, an old pram, battered saucepans.

'I'll try and get along if I'm here, duck. Thing is I was getting on all right till I started haemorrhaging last week. Going into 'orspital again Tuesday. If I'm here. All I can say.'

'Well, you take it easy.'

'That's what they all say. You have to get round the place though, don't you? And shopping – no one else can do it right can they?'

She wants to talk but I have to get on. One tick doesn't make a morning's canvassing.

'You take care.'

Five yesses. A brave sight on a canvass card. At the sixth a woman up to the elbows in flour answers; she holds up her arms like a surgeon after scrubbing up, which is rather disconcerting. 'Certainly. You make sure you win, dear! It's a lovely council, marvellous, they've done wonders for the old folk. Can't stop now. I had to lay out an old lady over the way yesterday and I'm making cakes for her relatives.'

Worth a hundred evasive Chestnuts. Except at the ballot box of course. After that it's a steady decline. There is the man in the garage of the huge Victorian house who manages to be very rude very politely – and who discovers for the first time that his 18-year-old son will be eligible to vote.

'Splendid. Must get old Tim down there. First week in May, you say?'

'You see', I think, addressing my interior monologue to Bob, 'It only stirs them up. A perfectly gratuitous brand-new Tory vote. Three Tory votes; the other two wouldn't have bothered if I hadn't come round poking them with a stick.'

At another large house a woman answers. I know her by sight, a plump motherly soul whose boy attends my children's school. We smile at each other in the street. We smile now. Funny, I could have sworn she lived on the council estate. Behind her a pile of Chilprufe vests, newly ironed, rests on the bannisters waiting to be taken upstairs. She is dreadfully embarrassed. So am I.

'Well, I never talk about it. I take no interest. It's not something we discuss.'

'I see.' I pause. It won't do, I can't leave it like that. Is she a Don't Know or an Against?

'Well, er. . . What about your husband? Is he a Don't Know?'

'Well . . . really . . . well. I think you've got a bit of a cheek, coming round asking for votes . . .'

'If you're *ashamed* of what you vote . . .'

'Who said ashamed?' We gaze at each other, four flaming cheeks cooled by the wind.

'I see. Yes. I've asked you the question and you don't want to answer. We'll leave it at that, then. Goodbye.' I speak firmly, in my best accent, and turn smartly on my boot and walk away. How will I ever face her in the Co-op?

My tights are coming down now. New yesterday. Should I take it up with the Consumer Council? Will I have time? I try hitching them up at the hip, surreptitiously, as I enter another wicket gate and start up another endless drive, hoping no one is watching from the window.

'How did you get on?' asks Bob in the boozer half-an-hour later.

'Terrible. One woman said I'd got a cheek. And as for the Chestnuts!'

'Never mind. Meet at the WI Hall next week. Then we'll start on *our* areas.'

But will it really be any better? I wonder, trying to shift my tights under cover of a sheaf of canvass cards. Well, at least they give you a straight answer.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

All Beer and Skittles

For some years now it has been extremely unfashionable to be happy. Novels, plays and poems have reflected this; and gloom, and not without some cause, is the popular thing. Happiness reveals a frivolous state of mind and the world looks askance and suspiciously at smiling faces (poor disgraced Nixon's courageous attempts at a rueful grin were considered particularly devilish). If you were to walk down Oxford Street smiling and calling a cheerful 'Hullo' or 'Good morning' to passers-by, you would be instantly arrested by the police and subsequently prosecuted, either for soliciting for immoral purposes or for using 'insulting behaviour', with a stiff spell in chokey to follow, the judge sternly announcing 'how intolerable it is when private and seemly persons cannot go about their daily business without being exposed to suggestive, impertinent and evil overtures'.

But not so in Devon. Here at 'Myrtlebank', when we sight our agreeable neighbours at 'Dunroamin', or any other cheerful village residents, it's loud hullos and good mornings all round and on until the cows come home, when it changes to good evenings instead. All is politeness and friendliness. Beauty and peace are everywhere. Every morning on waking I count my blessings. I get to 374 and then I stop, fearful that, unless I shut up, the Lord will strike me down.

I have to tell you something. I cannot help being happy. I've struggled against it, but no good. Apart from an odd five minutes here and there, I have been happy all my life. There is, I am well aware, no virtue whatever in this. It results from a combination of heredity, health, good fortune and shallow intellect. It is, in fact, rather a non-virtue as it is apt to bring with it complacency. It gives little joy to others. But there it is. I love life. Forgive me.

Laughter has much to do with it. The glum mystify me. For many months in the army I worked cheek by jowl with a morose, moustached major. He disapproved of me deeply, and understandably. I looked a very non-military figure and I took so little seriously. He arrived one day gloomier than ever. 'I say, most other people in the headquarters seem to be using Christian names, so I suppose we'd better start. What's yours?' I have three initials and the first of them is 'C'. Cynthia,' I answered, trying to lighten the occasion. '*Cynthia*?' 'Yes.' 'That's a bloody silly name for a man.' 'Yes, isn't it?' I said. For some days he called me Cynthia loudly and defiantly until I had to beg him to stop. 'People,' I explained, 'are talking,' but the feeble fun passed him by.

I learned laughter at my mother's knee, and with some difficulty for it shook continually. She was as uncontrollable as I was. It wasn't formal 'jokes' that amused us but the way people behaved, the things they said. There was a Torquay restaurant where we sometimes lunched and on one occasion everybody was having to wait rather long and some were being landed with dishes which they hadn't ordered. Near us were two middle-aged ladies of generous proportions who were without their food and were getting increasingly agitated. At last, one of them plucked up courage and we heard an agonised shout. 'Waitress! *Waitress*! We're the two stuffed marrows.'

In youth the learning of French could be perilously laughter-provoking, with masters reciting '*Maître corbeau, sur un arbre perché*' and making like a crow. Before going up to Cambridge I lived with a French family at Grenoble, amid pleasant snow-topped mountains. The family consisted of three unmarried sisters. Sisters that come in threes – Brontës, Chekhov's and Macbeth's – are often weird indeed. There was Mademoiselle Alice, permanently bedridden but registering her presence with little wails and moans and whimpers from a downstairs bedroom. There was Mademoiselle Cécile, the hinterland of whose mouth contained an apparently inexhaustible supply of molars, so frequently was she *chez le dentiste* having extractions, after which she would sit at meal-times clutching her jaw and swaying to and fro, muttering 'Ah, que je souffre!' Politeness called for some sort of show of sympathy but at that time my limited French could provide nothing more than 'Ah, *pauvre* Mademoiselle!'

The third sister, Mademoiselle Berthe, made up for the two others by being almost excessively robust. Her appetite was enormous. It was my first experience of sitting next to a really hungry French lady eating oil-soused lettuce in quite formidable quantities. Her method was to prong a vast forkful, apply it to her mouth and leave the rest to suction, helping a few outlying leaves in with the finger-tips, daintily crooked. The din was tremendous. She was like some machine in a factory, taking in the basic materials and then disgorging . . . well, what? In Mademoiselle Berthe's case, the end products were heavy French sighs, ear-splitting eructations, and other manifestations of repletion that I really don't care to go into. To restrain laughter, I had to think firmly of death (*la mort*).

I get quite a lot of simple happiness from running over in my mind activities which the world might consider smart, interesting or enjoyable and in which, thank God, I am *not* taking part. For example, I am not, in drenching rain and an east wind, attempting to light my very own barbecue on my chic little patio in SW1. I am not, Kwelled to the eyebrows, fighting *mal de mer* and other nauseas on a Greek shipowner's luxi-yacht in a choppy Mediterranean. I am not at a 'working lunch', in a tornado of nervous burps and hiccoughs, with the Prime Minister. I am not miles high in Concorde, eating (see advertisements) fois [*sic*] gras, scampi, and 'salad palm hearts specially flown from the Seychelles', a journey which must surely rank as the most lunatic mission of all time.

In *The Sound of Music*, melodious Julie Andrews made mention of some of her favourite things, listing among them 'snowflakes on kittens'. Well, I can rub along without them, but the message comes through all right. It's the simple things that, in the end, most cheer the heart. The countryside in all seasons. The wind in the willows. Cowslip fields. Friends. Love. Laughter. The best things in life are, indeed, free.

Robert G. Kaiser

RUSSIA

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Letters to the Editor

Dr O'Brien's Rational Debate

Sir, Mary Holland comments (NS 30 April) 'There are other reasons why Dr O'Brien has failed to muster the support . . . from the liberal Left of the Irish community' on the kind of issues on which Dr O'Brien now calls for 'rational debate'. There are indeed, and among the most important are Dr O'Brien's positively whimsical attachment to the principle of 'rational debate'. In 1971 when I suggested in a speech that just such a debate as he now advocates should be held on these issues, I included also homosexuality, therapeutic legal abortion and the secularisation of our schools. Dr O'Brien led those who criticised me with varying measures of intolerance and ignorance within the Parliamentary Labour Party for so doing. There was only one dissentient, Dr O'Connell, from the motion that my speech and its contents be repudiated by Brendan Corish. This Corish gladly did.

Equally Dr O'Brien has been a most vindictive opponent of 'rational debate' within the Labour Party, having in his own constituency had a branch expelled for differing with him on the Northern issue and republicanism. He has also been one of our most consistent harriers, in the witch hunts against the Left, for advocating socialist alternatives to the disastrous, universally conservative and sectarian social and economic policies of his Fine Gael cabinet colleagues – advocating our suppression and expulsion from the party, unsuccessfully.

He now knows, as we frequently warned him when he hopelessly advocated membership of this, our third and most calamitous coalition, that his partisans were ultra-conservative and sectarian; that without specific enforceable guarantees they would not accept the economic or social policies needed to create a 'just society'.

Far from sharing Mary Holland's enthusiasm for Conor O'Brien's 'fierce integrity', it is now believed that, with an impending election, in a predominently middle-class constituency where his position is by no means secure and where the electorate has much more mundane matters such as unemployment and high prices to worry them, Dr O'Brien is now somewhat desperate, quite cynically trying to 'change the ball game'.

'Rational debate' for Dr O'Brien is permissible only when it is Dr O'Brien who dissents. Elitist to the last, no doubt when he dies he will expect to be buried with full military honours in the hallowed Republican plot and rise again on the third day – like you know who.

NOËL C. BROWNE

The Senate
Dublin

Sir, Mary Holland's rather snide reflections on Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien's attempt to drag Ireland into the 20th century against the might of a backward-looking Catholic Church have been, unfortunately for her, overtaken by events, her piece of faint praise spoiled by the spirited intervention in support of Dr O'Brien by the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Garret FitzGerald, before the NS was on the streets. If Mary Holland lived in Ireland, or was not so evilly disposed against Dr O'Brien for what she considers his other sins, like failure to support free speech for Provos and their fellow-travellers, she would realise that the O'Brien view is not as lacking in support as she asserts. Dr O'Brien, for instance, told a crowded and enthusiastic Labour Party meeting at Sandford, Dublin, on Friday night (30 April) that he did not regard himself as being brave in advancing the case for the legitimising of contraception and divorce in the Republic, that nine out of ten people in Dublin, at any rate, thought exactly like him and said so.

For several years, the *Limerick Socialist*, which is published on the doorstep of Dr Newman, the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, who so intemperately attacked Dr O'Brien, has been demanding the constitutional changes needed to make Ireland a pluralist society and so has a vast majority of the correspondents to the *Irish Times*, the leading Dublin newspaper. In all this it is the Catholic Church view, or rather the view of a handful of its antediluvian bishops, that is the minority view.

But that is the lesser part of Mary Holland's diatribe against Dr O'Brien: she accuses him of backing the erosion of civil liberties. All he has done is to refuse a public forum to Provos and their allies. In this he has the support, by 22 votes to 3, of the Irish Parliamentary Labour Party which, by that margin, withdrew its whip from Dr Thornley, who had the gall to stand on the same platform as the Provo leader Daithi O Conaill. Indeed, if the parliamentary party had not taken this action there would have been resignations aplenty from the Labour Party. The Irish Labour Party, of which I am proud to be a member, is willing to sacrifice many small liberties to stop the Provos, who hate all liberty. Britain, after all, tolerated 18B when she was fighting for her life against Hitler; Mary Holland must let the Irish people decide how best they can save their own liberty against as vicious a threat; they do not feel menaced by Dr O'Brien and his colleagues in the coalition Government.

DERMOT MCEVOY

7 South Park Drive
Foxrock
Co. Dublin

Portugal and the Left

Sir, Anyone who went to the CDS party conference near Oporto a month ago would reject your description of them as 'crypto-fascists' in your leader on Portugal and the Left (30 April). On the contrary, we saw and listened to a remarkably enthusiastic gathering of mainly young Portuguese who had come into politics mainly because of their determination to keep their hard-won democracy alive. Their leader, Professor Freitas do Amaral, and his colleagues have earned widespread respect wherever they have gone in Europe precisely for this reason. It came as no surprise that they doubled their vote.

By all means, if you wish, criticise them for not being socialists. But it is as crude to call them crypto-fascists as it would be to call Dr Soares a communist.

DOUGLAS HURD

House of Commons

Islam's Noble City

Sir, I am sure that I am not the only writer of a letter regretting your publication of the two-page 'advertisement' (NS 23 April) entitled 'Jerusalem, Islam's Noble City'. I am glad to read the letter from Aziz Yafi (NS 30 April) correcting the reference to 'The Holy *War* in Palestine' which, I had noticed from my copy of the April issue of *Free Palestine*, kindly sent to me gratis every month, should have read 'the Holy *City* in Palestine'.

There are so many inconsistencies and misleading statements in these pages that it would take almost as much space to correct them all. Suffice it to stress one or two points:

(1) The 1969 fire at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem was started by a mentally deranged Australian Christian, now undergoing treatment in a mental hospital. Again I notice a difference between the form in which the *Free Palestine* advertisement appeared in your 23 April issue and what appears in the April issue of *Free Palestine*. In the latter it is claimed that this fire was 'started by a Zionist fanatic', whereas the word 'Zionist' was omitted from 'your' advertisement. What is not made clear is the rapidity with which the Israeli authorities dealt with that outrage, despite the obstructions attempted by many of the Arab inhabitants of the Old City, including the Muslim authorities at the site: this action culminated in the arrest and subsequent trial of the Australian culprit.

(2) Since 1967, as before 1948, all Jews, Christians and Muslims have been free to worship at their respective shrines without let or hindrance. During the intervening Jordanian occupation no Jews were allowed to enter the Old City of Jerusalem, even to approach the Western or Wailing Wall, their only holy place, despite the fact that they were to be granted such access by the UN armistice agreements between Israel and her Arab neighbours of 1948/9.

(3) It is not a good omen for future peace and understanding between the three monotheistic religions that Muslim Arabs seek to prohibit Jews from entry *even to the precincts* of the shrines of the Haram ash-Sharif. Many, if not the majority, of Jews, for their own reasons, do not wish, as yet, to set foot on the ancient Temple Mount.

Such claims and counter-claims relating to past history must be carefully weighed by neutral opinion. But it is surely better to look to the future and seek a basis for positive peace talks leading to a just and lasting settlement in the land that is sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Cannot the three monotheisms unite in heeding the psalmist's bidding and 'pray for peace of Jerusalem'?

C. WITTON-DAVIES

Archdeacon's Lodging
Christ Church
Oxford

The Plays of Mr Potter

Sir, Wilfred De'Ath's churlish letter about the plays of Dennis Potter (NS 30 April) shouldn't go unchallenged. De'Ath approvingly quotes Alasdair Milne as saying that 'it may, in certain instances, be right to outrage viewers in order to get across a particular point', and goes on to complain about Potter's *Double Dare*, 'whose meaning, in my opinion, was far from clear'. What is brutally clear is that Mr De'Ath – like that army of people who write letters to the *Radio Times* complaining that some play or other has 'grossly misrepresented' mental illness, or comprehensive schools, or the pop business, or whatever – thinks that the television play is a form of feature journalism. Feature articles (of the kind that Mr De'Ath writes for a living) do, indeed, get across particular points and have clear 'meanings'. Works of fiction, good ones at any rate, usually don't. Their meanings are often treacherous and mysterious, their points veiled with irony. Dennis Potter, as author of some of the richest and most double-edged fiction yet screened on TV, deserves to be judged by more sophisticated standards than those which we might justly apply to one of Mr De'Ath's articles..

Mr De'Ath would hesitate, I suspect, before parading the smug philistinism of 'whose mean-

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ing, in my opinion, was far from clear' in the face of, say, *No Man's Land* or *Equus*. Plays for the theatre, however, feeble, are readily accorded the status of art-objects, and their ambiguities are more usually honoured than derided. A play for television, though, because it occupies the same medium as journalism, is fair game for criticism on the crudest of journalistic grounds. No wonder that the most widely acclaimed TV plays, like *Cathy* and *The Lump*, are really fictionalised pieces of investigative journalism. No wonder Dennis Potter is currently threatening to stop writing plays for television. As long as television drama continues to be spoken of in the kind of terms used by Mr De'Ath, it will be harder and harder to make any fiction worthy of the name work on the medium.

JONATHAN RABAN

80 Redcliffe Square
London SW10

Camden Lock

Sir, I refer to Mervyn Jones's article in your issue of 30 April. I share his concern that Camden Lock should remain an area for individual craftsmen and designers to work and sell their wares. This was our original intention in setting up the Lock and still is. There are in fact now a total of 28 individual craft and design businesses at the Lock of which only nine are still in dispute. Those that have agreed, taking them forward another five years, include a silversmith, jeweller, potter, musical instrument restorer, model makers, leather workers, saddler, an art gallery, photographer, designers, sculptors, and toy maker – hardly 'boutiques' as was inferred. The retail outlet referred to as a 'variegated shop' is in fact a craft shop and workshop and exhibition centre set up by a jeweller and ourselves to promote English crafts and to provide an outlet in London for those making things at home or away from London. It is common practice to undermine a private self-supporting scheme on the basis that the principals are only in it for the money, but surely this is now rather outdated. It is true we have had to carry the Lock financially during its initial years and we do now need to make a return on the risk and capital we have put into the project.

With regard to Mr Jones's quote I would like to put the record straight by reiterating what I actually said: 'I felt only one or two of the tenants would actually leave and that we did not want the tenants to treat the Lock as a hobby but as a serious business. At the old rent levels, in some cases only £1.50 per week per individual or under £4 per week for a single unit, there had been a small minority who were here for the wrong reasons. With such a small weekly sum to find you could get an element who would treat the Lock as a club to meet friends and have coffee.'

P. I. O. WHEELER
Director

Northside Developments Limited
Commercial Place
London NW1

Weekly Words

Sir, I am indebted to you for your graceful reference last week to my contributions to the BBC's late programme, *The Weekly World* – though I must deny the 'contempt' you attribute to me for its successor, since I had been told no more about it than the scant words of my concluding paragraph, and anyway I would have been reluctant to prejudge it, as I fear you did. I am also indebted to you for raising the query about the date and circumstances of the beginning of the programme, since you have given me the opportunity to correct the record. The dates and names I used were provided, at my request, by the BBC. Prompted by your query, these have now been rechecked. The BBC reports that the programme began on 6 October 1962, with David Marquand reviewing the weeklies and Colin Doran reading the extracts. I am told the error was due to confusion between two BBC departments, and that the BBC takes responsibility. I refrain from comment, save to apologise to David Marquand and Colin Doran.

On your last point, however, I must defend my tribute to the 'readers' who have coped with the 'quotes' – or at least to most of them. Believe me, it is not easy to breathe life into extracts which have been written for the eye rather than for the ear. But your note does prompt me to further comment. In my experience, it has been the older, squarer 'readers' who have handled these programmes most successfully. I've been able to give the Snagges, the Dorans and the Kendalls any anecdotes, any accent, even a cheer or a song, and they've pitched into the performance with abandon. But not the po-faced young things with their rigid deadpan newsreaders' training and their respect for authority. I, too, mourn the passing of the programme, but a reviewer must have a 'reader' with a touch of the actor to make even your 'quotes', Sir, quotable.

HONOR BALFOUR

25 Royal Crescent
London W11

Sir, Radio-4 is not the most likely place to find a 'young trendy' (London Diary 30 April) and I was even more surprised to find the term applied to myself as the person who has 'inflicted' the newspaper programme *Between The Lines* on the network in place of the *Weekly World*. Of course, our modest attempt to widen discussion of the press to include people other than journalists is a most frightful 'gimmick', as Crucifer says. But on the whole I try not to pass judgment on programmes before I hear them, and I would suggest he does the same.

NIGEL REES

5a Fitzroy Road
London NW1

Hospital 'Hotel' Costs

Sir, Dr David Owen (NS 23 April) must know, and if he does not he should not be where he is, that the length of time a patient spends in hospital is not due to the vagaries of the doctors, but to their social circumstances. The retired colonel living in a detached house in the Home Counties will be fit for discharge a week earlier than the ex-miner, with chronic bronchitis, a disabled wife, damp house and outside toilet in a city slum.

It is this attitude which points the difference between doctors and the DHSS, and I think it is more important than the question of pay. Neither I, nor my husband, a surgeon, do private practice, but we do not wish to see the advent of a state monopoly, with any money available being spent on another few thousand civil servants to investigate overstay in hospital, rather than the domiciliary services. We need more field workers, not directives, *or* administrators.

ANNE SAVAGE

12 Turner Close
London NW11

Not So Secret Police

Sir, I would like to point out that the correct title and price of the book we published last week referred to by Frank Allaun (NS 30 April) is *The History and Practice of the Political Police in Britain* at £4.95. The first edition sold out within the week, but the second edition will shortly be available.

JULIAN FRIEDMANN

4 Perrins Lane
London NW3

About Oxford books

A major new biography

In **A New Life of Anton Chekhov**, to be published next week at £8.75, Ronald Hingley presents a portrait of a working dramatist and a fiction writer who was famous for contriving to imply – in his life as well as in his art – infinitely more than he ever seems, on the surface, to have said. Ronald Hingley has already earned the admiration of critics and readers for his translations of Chekhov's plays and stories in The Oxford Chekhov, which *The Times Literary Supplement* called 'a landmark in our Russian studies.' His biographical and critical study of Chekhov, published in 1950, was also widely acclaimed. In the new book, which is 'biography pure and simple', he turns his attention to Chekhov's life: his childhood, the development of his character and his genius, his relations with women, his achievements as doctor, scholar, educationist, explorer, and penologist. The result is a book that no-one familiar with Chekhov's work, whether from books or on the stage, will want to miss.

Women in China

Xiang Jingyu, one of the Communist Party's leading theorists and its main authority on women until her execution in Hankou in 1928, envisaged an alliance of revolutionary women intellectuals and labouring women to fight both for their own liberation and the total liberation of all oppressed people. This alliance did in fact come about under the Communist Party leadership, though the process was firmly established only after her death. In **Woman-Work: Women and the Party in Revolutionary China**, £5.95, Delia Davin traces the history of the alliance, its aims, its achievements. Although she concludes that women are still a long way from equality with men in the countryside, and that the classical Marxist solution to the woman problem did not prove quickly attainable, she argues that a fundamental change has taken place in that women now earn and receive money as individuals and have considerable political power, in the towns, at community level. Two important themes are the growth and reform of the educational systems and the enormous progress which had been made in public health and medicine.

Early music

Where did the crumhorn come from? How did the sackbut develop? What is the difference between a cittern and a gittern? How does the hurdy-gurdy work? These and many other questions are answered in David Munrow's new book, **Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance**, published last week at £3.95, a comprehensive guide to European musical instruments before 1600. He gives full details of the origin, development, and use of each instrument with full attention to the historical and social background. There are over 200 illustrations, including contemporary paintings and woodcuts, and photographs of original instruments and modern replicas being played by members of the author's *Early Music Consort*.

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MAY BOOKS

John Carey

A House that Tried to be Haunted

The Life of Emily Dickinson by RICHARD B. SEWALL *Faber* 2 vols £17.50
The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson edited by THOMAS H. JOHNSON *Faber* £3.95

When Emily Dickinson died in 1886 she left 1,775 poems, 1,049 letters, and enough problems to keep academic typewriters clattering for centuries. The bulk of the poems were found in the dead woman's room by a surprised relative. They included many semi-final drafts with uncancelled variants, heaps of scraps and jottings, and almost no dates. Both letters and poems are frequently couched in the staccato riddles characteristic of mature Dickinsonese – possibly a ruse for screening them from alien eyes, as well as a mark of their author's distrust of directness: 'Tell all the Truth,' was her advice, 'but tell it slant.' Even close friends had found the degree of slant baffling. 'All men say "What?" to me,' she once complacently lamented. And quite apart from their impenetrability, the newly-discovered poems soon prompted surmise because of the agony and violence they gave voice to. How did these torments and crucifixions fit into the life of the flower-loving recluse of Amherst – the white-clad spinster who would scamper upstairs to avoid callers, and lower dainties for favoured children on a string from her window? Come to that, what had turned Emily into this shy weirdie from the smart, vivacious adolescent she seems to have been?

Spectacular replies have accrued over the years. Her life was blighted by a faithless lover (several nominees, of both sexes, are available); or by her ogreish, puritanical father; or by her frigid, disease-racked mama. Professor Sewall's scrupulous, superb, half-million-word biography provides an antidote to speculation, sifting all the old evidence, and adding new from the Todd-Bingham family papers, which contain the revelations of Mabel Loomis Todd – the mistress, for some thirteen years, of Austin Dickinson, Emily's brother.

Father, it turns out, was no ogre. He gave his daughters books of poems to read, and allowed them such liberty of conduct that Emily's sister Lavinia was long remembered by at least one Amherst beau for the 'soft-lipped' kisses which she used to dispense. Mrs Dickinson, it's true, was often off-colour, but Emily's brisk reports of her ailments – 'Mother has been severely afflicted with the Neuralgia arising from her front tooth' – hardly encourage the view that the poetry's volcanic passions can be traced to this source.

As for lovers, there the ground is more fertile. Emily had a genius for forming unsuitable attachments, though it is always uncertain how far they existed outside her heated imaginings. The Reverend Charles Wadsworth, happily-married minister of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia; Samuel Bowles, busy editor of the *Springfield Republican*; and the formidable Judge Otis Phillips Lord, of the Superior Court of Massachusetts (renowned for having impeded the circulation of a defendant's blood, and rendered the man unconscious, by the sheer power of his cross-examination), were all, at one time or another, recipients of her affection as, it seems, were other more shadowy figures. Judge Lord, whom Emily fell for in her late forties, was 'My lovely Salem', 'My Sweet One', 'my Church'; Wadsworth was 'my dearest earthly friend'; while Bowles is probably to be identified as the 'Dear Master' of the voluptuously servile letters found among Emily's effects. 'Crazy about men,' Judge Lord's niece reckoned her – a 'little hussy . . . Insane, too'.

One trouble with critics who concentrate on spying out real-life sexy capers behind the poems is that they implicitly endorse this diagnosis. Professor Sewall advances on a broader front, and his triumph consists in resurrecting, in all its ingrown density, the small-town, mid-century New England culture that nourished Emily's writing. His first volume comprises biographies of Emily's grandfather, parents and siblings. Not till the start of his second does our heroine get born. But once alive she moves against this copious background more vividly than she could have done without it.

For one thing, her style comes to be seen as, in some measure, a family trait: an offshoot of the Dickinson hyperbole. Ostentatiously brainy and self-dramatising, it provided her with both cloak and dagger; and it was distinctly the idiom of the squire's daughter, the girl whose family had founded Amherst College, and still virtually ran it, graciously extending their patronage to the bright young men. The snobbish side of this rhetoric comes out in the anecdote about the elderly and tiresome lady who inquired of Emily for lodgings in Amherst, and found herself directed to the cemetery, 'to spare expense of moving', as Emily put it.

The obverse of her callousness was a tenderness for nature's wee things, vital to the poetry, where it strangely counterpoints the rigours of the form. It was not an ignorant tenderness. Botany and geology, as Professor Sewall shows, formed the spearhead of the instruction at Amherst Academy. The high count of technical terms in Emily's lyrics evidently stems from her schooldays, as does her herbarium, minutely labelled in Latin, with specimens from which the endpapers of one of these beautifully produced volumes are decorated. And her keenness for practicality showed up, too, in household management. Amherst knew her for bread, not poems: she won second prize in the rye and Indian class at the 1856 Cattle Show.

If home life for Emily was predominantly joyful, energetic and privileged, it had its bitterness as well. Youngsters she knew went off to be killed in the Civil War, and of those who stayed behind the proportion dying of disease seems to have been even higher than was usual in the 19th century. Her plans to make her family proud of her as a poet foundered miserably. The modernity of her work provoked only bewilderment. The litterateur Thomas Wentworth Higginson, to whom she sent some samples, pronounced them 'formless' and 'spasmodic', and their author 'half cracked'. Only seven poems were published during her lifetime, all anonymously, and with editorial botchings to make them rhyme and scan.

A further worry was her brother's marriage. In 1881 Mabel Loomis Todd arrived in Amherst. Pretty, headstrong and 24, she was the wife of a promising astronomer, David Todd, who had just been appointed director of Amherst College Observatory. At this time Emily's brother Austin, treasurer of the college, was in his fifties, and had been married to Sue Gilbert for 25 years. Nevertheless he and Mabel soon embarked on a passionate affair, which began when the hapless David was absent in California observing, appropriately enough, the transit of Venus. Young Professor Todd's tenure depended on Austin's good will, and the older man clearly took advantage of the situation. Before long David was cooperating in his own dishonour so abjectly that he would whistle tunes when coming up his garden path, to warn the lovers of his arrival. He finished up in a lunatic asylum.

Understandably, Mabel and Austin felt the need to paint their own conduct in the noblest colours, and blacken the other persons concerned. According to Mabel, David was a demon for women – no female caller at their home being safe – and as for Austin's marriage, it had been a disaster from the start: Sue threw carving knives at him, drank, detested sex (calling it a 'low practice'), but nevertheless often got pregnant and tried to keep herself childless by repeated abortions, with the result that her eldest son, born despite her efforts, was an epileptic. Since for most of this venomous indictment we have only Mabel's word, it's hard to know what to believe. Her hatred of Sue approached the maniacal:

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when, in 1913, she suffered an attack of heat-stroke, she insisted that Sue, who had died some months earlier, had smitten her from beyond the grave. The importance, if any, of the whole squalid business for Emily's poetry hinges on the fact that, during her most prolific period, she was in daily contact with Austin and his family, who lived next door. If the marriage really was as ghastly as Mabel says Austin said it was, it can hardly have left his sister untouched.

True, poets need not go to Niagara to write about falling water – as Robert Frost observed. One effect of Professor Sewall's volumes, as of all great literary biographies, is to remind us how tentative any 'explanation' of the works in terms of the life must be. To fancy that Emily had to live intensely to make her poems intense is to get things back to front. Being alone with her poems was for her more fiercely real than mixing with people, which is why she became a recluse: 'My own words so chill and burn me,' as she once explained when refusing to see a caller. The majority of her fellow men existed, she felt, at a level of insensibility that would disgrace a brute: 'they talk of Hallowed things aloud – and embarrass my Dog.' But when all allowances have been made for the autonomy of the imagination, it still remains true that her poems are immeasurably illuminated by the life Professor Sewall paints. Reading them through again afterwards (in Mr Johnson's opportunely published paperback, based on his 1955 variorum), one experiences them more closely than ever before. 'Nature,' said Emily, 'is a Haunted House – but Art – a House that tries to be haunted.' That hers succeeded is proved by our still so eagerly pursuing its ghosts.

Christopher Hitchens

Laid Out

The Death of British Democracy by STEPHEN HASELER *Elek* £5.95

Suddenly, at home? Lingeringly, abroad? Stephen Haseler does not qualify his 'theory' of British democracy's decease with so much as a question mark. It has died, evidently, in the marginal sense that Calvin Coolidge expired. How could we tell? And what difference did it make?

For Dr Haseler the diagnosis was an easy one. Like his right-wing counterpart Robert Moss, he can tell a cancer of society when he sees one. And he sees it in the very tissues and entrails of the country. Unlike the reactionary sophisticate Moss, however, the good Doctor is a social democrat. He believes that the falling-off began when Ernest Bevin ceased to be the glass of fashion and the mould of form in the Labour Party, when trade unions took to political action, when constituency parties thought of setting a term to the endless careers of 'moderate' MPs. It was William Rodgers in an incidental speech who made the distinction be-

Educational planning in the Department of Education and Science is too passive, too negative – too set on short-term goals. Who says so? Lord Crowther-Hunt, former minister of state in the Department from 1974 to 1976.

The Fulton Report of 1966–68 was concerned with, and stressed the need for, more long-term planning – why hasn't this happened?

The organisation of planning within the Department of Education and Science seems to require three main committees. Why not just one efficient planning unit instead?

Why does the Department contain no educational psychologists or sociologists – not one professor or lecturer in education in its planning units?

Is planning concerned enough with the role of education in relation to the needs of a modern industrial society – a society forever facing new priority issues in an atmosphere of change?

Lord Crowther-Hunt criticises and assesses planning in the Department of Education and Science, Manpower Planning, and the role of the universities and the University Grants Committee in three outspoken articles starting this week in The THES. Don't miss The THES on 7 May.

THE TIMES
Higher Education
SUPPLEMENT
Price 15p

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ADVE

CAN BRITAIN AFFO

should a British Governm

When Britain ruled in colonial Southern Africa, what was then known as British South Africa contained many black homelands including Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland.

This was so until 1910 when the Union of South Africa was formed. In that year Britain decided to retain separate jurisdiction over these three black homelands and left the other black nations to be administered by the Union Government.

During the Sixties Britain granted independence to its three Protectorates. All of these black homelands (Bechuanaland, which later became Botswana, Basutoland which became Lesotho, and Swaziland) were not only immediately recognized but accepted by the Commonwealth and United Nations as fully-fledged member states.

Later this year the first of the homelands administered by South Africa since 1910 is becoming independent.

The Transkei (pronounced Tran-sky as in blue sky) compares, on all counts, even more favourably with Africa's established independent nations. It is destined to achieve full sovereignty on October 26.

Its elected Chief Minister, Dr Kaizer Matanzima, has already declared that he intends to run a true multi-racial state.

When Mr James Callaghan was Foreign Secretary his then Minister of State, Mr David Ennals, indicated that the new independent Transkei was unlikely to fulfil Britain's criteria for recognition (this, despite the fact that South Africa is simply following Britain's lead in not only recognizing the rights of the various black nations of the old British colonial South Africa to a distinctive homeland but also their claims to full independence).

In fact, in the case of the Transkei, South Africa is now set to restore an injustice of British colonial policy by granting its people the same dignity of nationhood as Britain happily accorded to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Under British rule the Transkei, the territory then known as Kaffraria and once recognized as autonomous, was arbitrarily incorporated into the Cape Colony without even consulting its inhabitants.

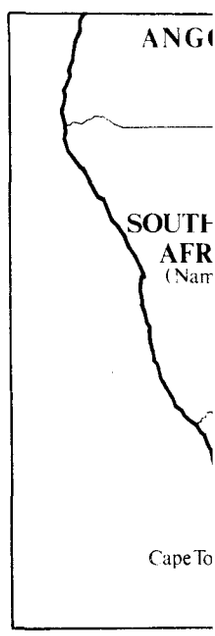
Chief Minister Matanzima has pointed out that the world would have hastened to recognize his country's independence if it had fought a bloody war of independence against White South Africa.

BUT the fact that his government has won three general elections on the non-violent road to full independence, and receives liberal financial and other assistance from White South Africa, somehow disqualifies the Transkei.

In striking contrast a minority tribe is put into power in Angola by Soviet tanks and Cuban soldiers, smashing the resistance put up by the other two tribes supported by two-thirds of the population, and is almost immediately recognized by Britain.

Can the British Government afford to apply these double standards and, in so doing, tarnish Britain's historic reputation for fair play in the eyes of the black people of the Transkei?

The Transkei Legisl
at its opening sessio



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RD DOUBLE THINK

apply double standards?

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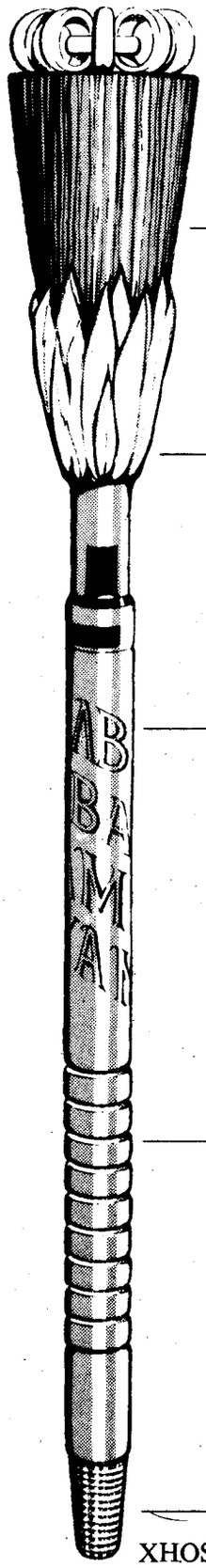

Ivory rings (nine) – similar to the IMIXHAKA worn by the paramount chiefs – joined by a golden band: traditional tribal government of the Bantu aristocracy.

INGOBOZI basket (black stinkwood) – in which mealies are usually stored: symbol of people who are kept together as a united body.

Shrine of mealie cobs: productivity, abundance and prosperity.

IMBUMBA YAMANYAMA – words engraved on bronze cylinder: UNITY IS STRENGTH, the unity of the Xhosa.

Nine bronze rings – on which the names of the tribal, or regional, authorities appear in alphabetical order.

Bronze cylinder with golden thread.

XHOSA MACE

erted by the CLUB OF TEN
nt House, 87 Regent Street, London W1R 7HF

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tween a 'legitimate' and an 'illegitimate' Left, but it took Dr Haseler to make a whole book out of the idea. He covers a great acreage of familiar territory and in familiar language. Vociferous minorities, smart London journalists, general lethargy and many other clichés are cast in their allotted roles. There are occasional bursts of originality – the author believes that Labour should not have abolished its proscription list – but few other surprises.

The enterprise cheers up a bit, though, when it comes to solutions and prophylactics. Haseler thinks that 'populism' can save us, and that earthy, anti-elitist, non-ideological commonsense is the dose required. He used to believe, alone among social democrats, that the electorate would turn and rend the snobs and faggots who wanted us in Europe. Unabashed by that fiasco, he now suggests that 'Brian Walden of the Labour Party, Rhodes Boyson of the Conservative Party and Cyril Smith of the Liberal Party are all potential populist politicians of the first rank'.

This is comedy of at least a medium-high order. But it rapidly turns blue at the edges. For an academic of any standing at all to quote Lord George Brown uncritically as having exposed Marxist control of the shadow cabinet as early as 1972 is not just tumbling in to pratfalls and factoids. (How thoughtful of the reds to relinquish control so meekly and make way for smiling Jim.) He is, as Bertie Wooster would say, an academic who has been sitting out in the sun without a hat.

The same goes when it comes to George Orwell. Dr Haseler quotes him as if he had never been quoted before, and tries to enlist him as a 'populist' father figure. It doesn't wash. To say that Orwell in his 'Lion and Unicorn' was describing the English family as a 'comfortable national unity' is simply and frankly illiterate. In the same essay, but unremarked by Haseler, Orwell says of the family:

> it has rich relations who have to be kow-towed to, and poor relations who are horribly sat upon, and there is a deep conspiracy of silence about the source of the family income.

Other people have tried to use Orwell for cold-war and anti-intellectual purposes before; Haseler, who unthinkingly reports that Orwell's view of Spain was 'liberal', has here caught the rebound.

All the other signs of disingenuousness are there – the use of quotes as gobbets ('as x has argued') with no supportive reasoning; and the Hogg-like amalgam of picketing, terrorism, football violence and racism as indices of the same 'crisis'. The difficulty with scorning bad books on national doom is that one may sound complacent and cynical. But, faced as we are with the curse of being the first moribund industrial society, we can't afford Jeremiads of this ill-argued sort. Haseler's foreword thanks 'John Gyford who . . . has often kept me from straying too far, particularly in moments of exasperation, from a commonsense approach to politics'. Mr Gyford evidently took a sabbatical for most of last year. Otherwise he could have pointed out that the book which implicates him is not the cure for our disease but a part of it.

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John Fowles

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I like only one zoo in this country. It is easily the smallest, and virtually confined to one species, the South American Woolly Monkey; and in fact the moving spirit, Mr Leonard Williams, will not bless me for calling his Monkey Sanctuary (near Looe in Cornwall, most warmly recommended to any crossing the Tamar this summer) a zoo at all. His establishment has no truck with ordinary zoo-keeping and its aims, and his fascinating colony of monkeys and the equally fascinating colony of young human tenders – *not* keepers – very soon make it clear to the visitor why this is. A statutory part of any visit to the Monkey Sanctuary is a ceremony called 'meeting the monkeys', in which it is the humans – peremptorily, if needs be – who are taught some elementary intergeneric manners.

By giving strict parity of territorial possession to his charges and imposing no more restriction on them than is necessary for their own safety in our climate and ecology, and so allowing them to develop their natural complex tribal culture (I should add that in the wild the Woolly Monkey inhabits the high rain-forest levels and is exceptionally difficult to observe), Mr Williams has made some remarkable discoveries – and ones quite as pertinent to our own remote ancestry as to sinian ethology in general. Many of the behaviours – for example in the solution to the problem of individual aggression or in the role played by the adults, irrespective of kinship, in protecting and teaching the young – show an intelligence, and even an altruism, that must cause out-and-out behaviourists one or two sleepless nights. Last summer I watched a senior of the clan being endlessly provoked by a mischievous one-year-old, and handling him with a mixture of humour and indulgence, and finally, when the fun had to stop, with a gentle firmness that would not have shamed a crack human nursery. The simple fact is that small miracles can happen if cage-neurosis is banned altogether.

The disfavour in which Mr Williams is held (or so I understand) by his far larger rivals (perhaps out of sheer jealous rage, since the Woolly is very far from being the easiest monkey to keep, let alone breed successfully) seems to me symptomatic of what is wrong with the whole institution of the 'normal' zoo. To my mind closely confining animals for the mere amusement of a human audience is a loathsome and outdated practice, one of our most jettisonable inheritances from the Victorian age. It always reeks of the worst, umbrella-poking side of the Cockney character, and it really belongs with the bear-baiting and cock-fighting obscenities of a much earlier stage in our history. It now degrades abominably our already degraded species. The Victorians at least had the excuse that they had no other way of seeing the living animal. In this century of universal television and the nature film, of the Goodalls and the Fosseys, we have lost even that.

The international zoo establishment has its defence, of course. The show-business side of it finances the more serious one, the scientific work and the captive breeding of endangered species – worthy enough functions in themselves, although the breeding is only half the battle, and one could wish as much energy and as many funds were devoted to reintroducing into the wild. Yet I think that this justification of exploitation by good works is ultimately no more convincing than Sunday piety in a ponce. It is the gross basic exploitation for entertainment of less fortunate species than our own that lies at the heart of the matter. And for once Blake had it slightly wrong. It is not so much a robin redbreast in a cage that puts all Heaven in a rage as the imprisonment (for the terrible crime of being strange to us) of all those other far less sedentary and closely territorial species that zoos are expected to show.

I suppose one of the most beautiful zoos in this country, in Betjemanesque terms, is the Bristol, with its visually exquisite (and physically foully cramped) Victorian range of cat and primate cages. Anyone can see the aesthetic charm of a tiger or a lion there, majestically perched as in a Landseer on one of the cast-iron pedestals; and, very

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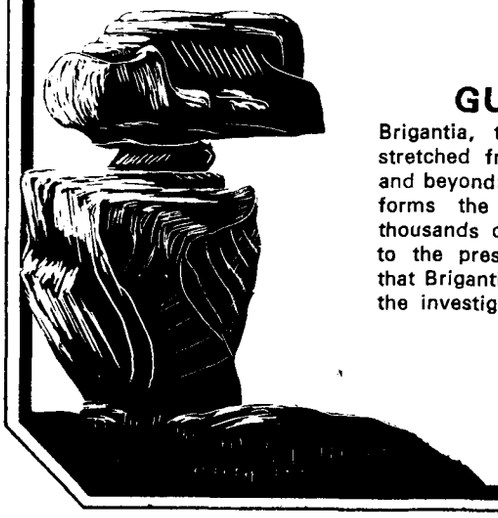

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well, big cats, like domestic ones, are inherently lazy beasts. But there's another cage at Bristol, where a few years ago I very nearly forestalled the theme of Russell Hoban's moving and very relevant novel *Turtle Diary*. It contained, if my memory serves me right, no less than three Snowy Owls, one of Europe's noblest and most beautiful birds. If one wanted an ultimate antithesis of the cage, it is this creature. I've seen it wild only once in my life, at great range, in the Arctic tundra of Northern Norway; but a thousand times better the remote once, or never, than the revolting inhumanity of that close-meshed little oubliette at Bristol.

We really cannot go on any longer with this attitude to our higher fellow-species on this planet. The cage is a medieval torture, and only too often a disgusting public hutch for the devitalised and brain-washed, and it is high time we gave up the menagerie principle altogether. For a start I should like to see the Regent's Park Zoo closed down and retired to Whipsnade. I do not wish it many happy returns on its 150th birthday, but a prompt extinction.

I must apologise to readers who expected an ordinary review of the three tastefully illustrated and anecdote-stuffed books above – all composed (Dr Vevers's is an anthology, the Duckworth a collection of historic zoo photographs) to celebrate the sesquincentennial. It is not that they aren't, in a literary sense, readable, and indeed fairly frank about countless appalling and brutish 19th-century errors in animal-keeping and general policy; but I could finish neither, I became so angry that the present ethos of the system was put under so little scrutiny – as though the principles of an existing concentration camp can be excused if it is shown they were much worse in the past. Under their charm and urbanity these books all perpetuate a profound, and profoundly damaging, heresy: that amusing excuses abusing. We all detest the rule of apartheid in South Africa, treating the Bantu 'like animals': but in our attitude to zoos we are all diehard Boers.

The old legend has it that if the Tower of London loses its ravens, England falls. I don't know about England, but I am very sure that any would-be civilised society is fallen until it frees, both literally and metaphorically, its ravens. I count myself lucky these days if I hear wild ones over my house once a year. I still wait for their visit in 1976, and not just because ravens have always been, in my private mythology, the bird more than bird, one very ancient key to the inadequacies of being a wingless biped; but also because – 'take thy beak from out my heart' – I know another poet got it not just slightly, but completely, wrong. What the wisest of birds really says, on behalf of all wild nature, is 'Evermore'. Eternity has no place for cages.

Among this week's contributors:

ALEXANDER GOEHR is a composer and Professor of Music at Leeds University.

MICHAEL KUSTOW is associate director of the National Theatre and is the author of *Tank*, published by Cape last year.

EDWARD PYGGE is assistant manager of one of Southend's premier marinas.

Michael Kustow

Exile's Return

Poems 1913-1956 by BERTOLT BRECHT edited by John Willett and Ralph Manheim with the co-operation of Erich Fried *Eyre Methuen* £15.00 (a three-volume paperback edition without notes will be published in September at £1.95 the volume)

If Bertolt Brecht's artistic personality – guarded, self-questioning, tensed against effusiveness – did not inhibit easy affirmations, one could simply assert that this English edition of more than 500 of his poems is a literary landmark. The translators, many of them poets – Stephen Spender, Michael Hamburger, Peter Levi Christopher Middleton – have frequently made memorable English poems, imprinted with Brecht's deceptively simple language and studied irregularity, yet reminiscent of relevant poetic idioms familiar to an English reader: Kipling, Whitman, even echoes of Carlos Williams and late Yeats. The editors scholarship and elucidation are exemplary restoring the poems to a chronological order and thematic grouping, which Brecht's own selective anthologising and the vagaries of publication in times of war, exile and advisable political prudence had largely hidden.

The central continuous seam of Brecht's poetry is revealed – and illuminated by a critical apparatus even more thorough than in the German collected editions. This book is a major achievement of literary reclamation. It is also a document of what John Willett rightly calls 'the tragedy of our time': a life-span of poetry out of the storm-centre of the first half of this century. Decade by decade, the poems are marked by the sharply differentiated contexts in which Brecht found himself. He enters as the Augsburg Rimbaud, the Villon of Bavaria singing raucous cabaret ballads about the harlot Evelyn Roe the parricide Jacob Apfelbock, thumbing his nose at God but treating nature with the respect due to an antagonist who will outlast man. Already the strands of his mature poetry are evident: the vigorous, even kitschy language of ballads about pirates and shipwrecks and boozing which will be refined into the songs of *The Threepenny Opera* and *Mahagonny*, the ferocious depiction of impassive natural forces and the sobriety of Lutheran-style chorales and pseudo-devotional verses which will later acquire a political content. There is another surprising voice, apocalyptic and sometimes almost Beckettian, in the 'Psalms' in which he speaks of love and the power of natural appetite.

In one of the notes to his poetry, Brecht talks about the collapse after Goethe of 'the splendid unity, so full of contradictions' of German poetry, leading to linguistic dissipation in epigram (Heine) or pontification (Hölderlin). Brecht set himself to purify the dialect of his tribe between these two extremes, and his first real advance towards a new poetic idiom occurs in the city poem of the Twenties. After the hedonism and

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luxuriance of Augsburg, Berlin's brutal massiveness shook him into an entirely different kind of utterance: spindly, spare, austere poems constructed like pincers. 'This Babylonian confusion of words/Results from their being the language/Of men who are going down,' he says, and 'A Reader for Those who Live in Cities' is a sardonic survival manual for those who are downtrodden, advising them to face the fact that they are dispensable, can be replaced in their rooms, jobs and sexual connections by other identical human ciphers. 'Give up your dream that they will make/An exception in your case/What your mothers told you/Binds no one': it's an announcement of the new rules of the game, an implacable admonishment for inflation-bound cities.

Capitalism submerges individuality; communism can exact a willing self-abnegation. Brecht began to study Marxism in 1927 and his poetry of the Thirties manifests a different kind of impersonality. Agitational choruses for workers' choirs, Homeric accounts of episodes in the Soviet Union, satirical anti-Hitler hymns, militant lullabies – his poetry pared itself to become immediately utilitarian. But the sense of a resistant self determined to preserve quality and idiosyncracy against the great levelling persists, and grows stronger as Brecht approaches the next endurance test, exile.

From 1934 to 1937, from Scandinavia to California, Brecht was in exile, and wrote his greatest poetry. The sense of tension and tightly-coiled contradiction between mask and face, the pressure in the voice of the man 'who wanted to prepare the ground for friendliness and could not himself be friendly' is screwed up to its highest pitch. And yet the precision of his craft, harnessing the harshest insights into crystalline patterns based on 'gestus' (a scrupulous attention to the underlying attitude behind any utterance and its precise rhythmic and syntactical form – perhaps Brecht's greatest legacy to poets now), produced works of stoic equanimity.

You sense a man uprooted, fighting from a remote position, wounded by the death of his friends (because of Nazism, because of Stalinism), seduced by Danish trees and water, scornful of the Hollywood marketplace, cherishing his treasured household tokens – the portable radio, the Japanese masks, the Chinese painted scroll, the manuscript briefcase, the pipes and ashtrays – a man reduced, exposed and solitary. There is unbearable pathos and fierce denunciation; yet both are constantly tempered by a refusal to overvalue the importance of his suffering or his ability to effect change through his writing.

This modesty – the fruit of his Marxist self-abnegation, of the hard-won artlessness of his forms, and of that persona of the wise Chinese sage distanced from the swirl of events which colours so many of his best poems – is Brecht's distinctive voice in any pantheon of socialist poets. Its realism will alway set him apart from the bullying loud-hailers, the hysterical prophets, the agonised lyricists foreseeing heroic martyrdom for the cause.

The same steady self-scrutiny marks the smaller output of his final years in East Germany. There is some journeyman public uplift poetry and a handful of spiky anti-Establishment epigrams, including the angry poem about the June 1953 uprising urging the government to elect a new people if it's dissatisfied with the one it's got: but most of the energy goes into diminutive verses, *haiku* or Greek epigrams, suffused with a benevolent and quizzical tenderness. Love-poetry surfaces again: before, it was guardedly unromantic, even cynical; now it is more yielding. And, coming full circle, there are reminiscences of childhood.

But Brecht the combatant, Brecht the man of savoury contradictions, could not end in harmonious resolution. He was coming to the close of his life in a society where his political dream was being realised. But he knew too much to slumber and wallow in the realised dream:

The little rose, oh how should it be listed?
Suddenly dark red and young and near?
Oh we never knew that it existed
Then we came, and saw that it was here.

Unexpected till we came and saw it
Unbelievable as soon as seen,
Hit the mark, despite not aiming for it:
Isn't that how things have always been?

Four Poems by Bertolt Brecht

The Cherry Thief

Early one morning, long before cockcrow
I was wakened by whistling and went to the window.
In my cherry tree – grey dawn filled the garden –
Sat a young man, with patched up trousers
Cheerfully picking my cherries. Seeing me
He nodded, and with both hands
Pulled the cherries from the branches into his pockets.
For quite a while as I lay once more in bed
I heard him whistling his gay little song. (1938)

Bad Time for Poetry

Yes, I know: only the happy man
Is liked. His voice
Is good to hear. His face is handsome.

The crippled tree in the yard
Shows that the soil is poor, yet
The passers-by abuse it for being crippled
And rightly so.

The green boats and the dancing sails on the Sound
Go unseen. Of it all
I see only the torn nets of the fishermen.
Why do I only record
That a village woman aged forty walks with a stoop?
The girls' breasts
Are as warm as ever.

In my poetry a rhyme
Would seem to me almost insolent.
Inside me contend
Delight at the apple tree in blossom
And horror at the house-painter's speeches.
But only the second
Drives me to my desk. (1939)

The Fishing Tackle

In my room, on the whitewashed wall
Hangs a short bamboo stick bound with cord
With an iron hook designed
To snag fishing-nets from the water. The stick
Came from a second-hand store downtown. My son
Gave it to me for my birthday. It is worn.
In salt water the hook's rust has eaten through the binding.
These traces of use and of work
Lend great dignity to the stick. I
Like to think that this fishing-tackle
Was left behind by those Japanese fishermen
Whom they have now driven from the West Coast into camps
As suspect aliens; that it came into my hands
To keep me in mind of so many
Unsolved but not insoluble
Questions of humanity. (1943)

On a Chinese Carving of a Lion

The bad fear your claws.
The good enjoy your elegance.
This
I would like to hear said
Of my verse. (1951)

The Cherry Thief *is translated by Agnes Headlam-Morley,* The Fishing Tackle by *Lee Baxendall. The two other poems are translated by the editors in collaboration.*

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SOLZHENITSYN

Lenin in Zürich

Translated by H. T. Willetts

'Lenin in Zürich is an outstanding work in its own right, a tour de force which requires no justification for its separate appearance, although reasons in plenty emerge from a reading of it . . . Solzhenitsyn succeeds brilliantly. Not since *The First Circle* has he displayed such a sure touch in the choice and handling of apposite detail . . . the magnificent Rembrandtian portrait of Lenin in Zürich.' *Michael Scammell, Times Literary Supplement* £3·75

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Geoffrey Gorer

Mum's Army

Mothers: Their Power and Influence by ANN DALLY *Weidenfeld* £4.50
Daughters and Mothers: Mothers and Daughters: The Relationship Explored by SIGNE HAMMER *Hutchinson* £4.25
Goodbye Father by MAUREEN GREEN *Routledge* £3.95
The Character of Adoption by MARY KATHLEEN BENET *Cape* £5.95

Aldous Huxley once bracketed Lhasa and the ladies' lavatory as two places inaccessible to him; and I have always, until now, thought the bracket reasonable. But with these four books, I feel I have penetrated at least to the purlieus of the ladies' lavatory; they are books written by women for women and not intended for male eyes. They are all concerned (Mrs Benet less than the others) with the unprecedented dilemma of the modern suburban woman: how can they hold down a job and at the same time bring up children to be unneurotic individuals?

Of course, the dilemma is a false one. Throughout human history the vast majority of women have worked and raised children; the only females who did not do so were ladies (a word these authoresses never employ). It is a historical change for ladies – the educated daughters and wives of the educated and prosperous – to take employment outside their homes and to bring up children with little help from servants; and it would seem, on the evidence of these books, that the psychological agonising of these *ci-devant* ladies in the residential suburbs is intense.

Their burden is seen as psychological, not financial; the great majority of women in these books work because they want to, to fulfil themselves, not because they need the money. They have read, or heard about, enough modern psychology and psychoanalysis to be apprehensive of mishandling their children; and, it would seem, they fill their scanty leisure by reading how-to books on parenting, as their mothers might have on cooking or gardening. 'Our modern world has produced a complicated conflict for mothers' and 'All this throws a great strain on mothers', Dr Ann Dally, a psychiatrist in private practice, comfortingly states. Her book is an inflation of an idea which might have made quite an interesting short paper: the concept that there are three types of mothering – enclosure, extension and separation – which should succeed one another chronologically. The infant needs enclosure, the toddler extension and the adolescent separation; but not all women are able to shift to the requisite phase-adequate type of mothering, and this can produce difficulties for their children; and some environments and social arrangements facilitate one type of mothering rather than the other two.

This simple theme is extended to book-length by large chunks of literary quotations, short and unconvincing case-histories, and pages of wordy waffle; for example:

> The adult is formed from the youth, the ten-year-old, the six-year-old, the toddler, the infant, the foetus and from the original germ cells that contain all the inherited material.

Such insights are thick on the page. Like her pen-sisters, Dr Dally freely dispenses gobbets of generally inaccurate popular anthropology, ethology and Freudian psychoanalysis; she is more accurate with her favourite authors, Drs Bowlby, Winnicott and Ariès.

Ms Signe Hammer is American and therefore quotes more readily from Horney and Erikson, but otherwise her sophistication is on much the same level; her major theme is that:

> Mothers of young children today see motherhood as part of their identity, but not the whole of it. They are trying to construct a style of mothering in which their own needs as persons are not submerged in the needs of their families and in which the identities of their children, and particularly of their daughters, are not subordinated to their expectations.

Ms Hammer conducted 75 interviews with pairs of mothers and daughters, most of them white middle-class, to establish to what extent daughters are recognised as 'separate people' and mothers retain a 'sense of self', both ardently to be wished.

Probably inevitably for this type of how-to book, Mesdames Dally and Hammer assume that mother is infinitely the more important parent, but they do intermittently acknowledge that fathers are around Maureen Green (English, married, one daughter) holds that

> no one is taking any notice of father . . . To attempt to work out how agonising our loss might be if we became a society of the fatherless, and to speculate whether this might destroy us or finally make us grow up, is the purpose of this book.

Mrs Green is even more slapdash in her use of pseudo-anthropology and potted history than her sisters. She is very sexist and states that only women feel 'abiding *concern*' and (against all the evidence) are 'experimenters, as permissive and welcoming to new theories as to new faces. Mother is the mother of invention, frequently promoting change for change's sake'.

On the whole, Mrs Green concludes, fathers are useful objects round the house, particularly in providing a model for their sons and in awakening their daughters' heterosexuality; but a bad father is worse than none. Mrs Green is a journalist and writes agreeably; she has an interesting chapter on 'Fathers Without Families' and an account of a pressure group, 'Families Need Fathers', founded in 1974, to preserve the parental rights of divorced or separated fathers, who tend to be deprived of their children by contemporary magistrates.

It is probably unfair to bracket Mary Kathleen Benet (born American, married and working in England, one daughter) with the other writers discussed; for *The Character of Adoption* does contain some serious research and some useful information. Mrs Benet's object was to provide a

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history of adoption at all times and in all places, but she has caught herself in a semantic trap. Adoption – the withdrawing of children from their natural parents and incorporating them in an unrelated family – is a legal concept and can be considered to occur only when there is written family law. The widespread fostering of orphans, the possible mobility in extended families, and the recognition of unrelated adults as legal heirs can be considered as synonymous with adoption only by an unhelpful dilution of the term. Mrs Benet devotes some chapters to these devices for incorporating children or adults in non-parental families; and since her views on tribal societies are pretty simplistic and since she is a knee-jerk radical (tribal and revolutionary societies good, capitalist bad, bad) these are not very useful. She is, however, interesting and informative about adoption in Britain and the US in this century. I was surprised to learn that the first English-speaking adoption law was passed in Massachusetts in 1851 and the first British Act in 1926. Mrs Benet would seem to be correct in connecting legal adoption with the decline of Christianity; it is still not accepted in Islam.

With her Calvinist radicalism, she sees adoption as an exploitation by the rich adoptees of the poor natural mothers and, more recently, by the white of the coloured. Her facts and figures are informative, particularly on the recent inter-country and inter-racial adoption in the United States. Her interpretation of these activities is heavily biased; she cannot see anything praiseworthy in prosperous whites undertaking the responsibility of Korean or Vietnamese war bastards; but she does give all the relevant information.

What of course she cannot, indeed does not attempt to, explain is why these prosperous Americans, Swedes, British and others, many of them infertile, some of them with their own families, go to such extraordinary lengths, frequently illegal, and great expense to import 'third world' babies, now that the availability of abortion in the adopting countries has so diminished the supply of illegitimate and unwanted children as to create a 'baby famine'. It would seem that most human beings are programmed for parenting, even if the educated and employed mothers of the English and American suburbs find motherhood a strain.

Paul Theroux

Piccaninny Line

The Great Uhuru Railway by RICHARD HALL and HUGH PEYMAN *Gollancz* £5.50

You could hear the toilets flushing and the shower-water sluicing down the pipes a mile away, and when you came closer you saw them – hundreds of Chinese – at the curtainless windows, brushing their teeth, shouting, scraping their tongues, plastering their hair with goo, doing knee-bends, and generally preparing for their African task. It was a tall tower block at Dar es Salaam University in 1967; the whole place was occupied by a survey crew for 'the Freedom Railway'; and the oddest thing of all was that, when they were outside the place they had turned into a mammoth locker room, they strolled in wary groups of eight or ten and rarely spoke to a soul, except to call out '*Jambo!*' to thoroughly bewildered Africans. Mr Hall and Mr Peyman introduce their story of 'China's showpiece in Africa' by speaking of the Chinese workers' 'sexual restraint', but informed sources (a Zanzibari hooker I met in Kampala) claimed that the Chinese could be quite straightforward and after a glass or two of Tusker beer winked at African girls and said meaningfully, 'You – me – bed?'

The 1,162 mile railway from Dar to Kapiri Mposhi in Zambia (where it joins the Lusaka-Ndola line) was not the brainchild of the Chinese. It was first envisioned by Cecil Rhodes, and later (1906-14) the Germans made their own contribution with a line from Dar to Kigoma. After the first world war it looked as if the British railway magazine, quoted by Hall and Peyman, might be right in saying that the dusty town of Tabora would soon 'lay claim to the title of "the Clapham Junction of Africa" '. For various reasons action was delayed: it would certainly be expensive, its economic worth was questionable, and no one wanted another 'Groundnut Scheme'. But it became a political matter, and the Zambians saw it as a way of ending their dependency on Rhodesia and South Africa; indeed, the railway was one of Kenneth Kaunda's campaign promises in 1963. 'Tiny' Rowlands provided a Lonrho feasibility study that same year, but irritated Kaunda by including Hastings Banda in his plans. The World Bank turned its nose up at the idea of a railway and suggested building a road, which the Americans said they would fund.

Then Rhodesia cannibalised the American Declaration of Independence and UDI was proclaimed, and when the African leaders saw the charade that followed they turned their cupped hands towards the East. The Chinese were prompt and responsive, quick-marching 200,000 Chinese to the airport to wag flags at Julius Nyerere's incoming plane. In the event, it was the Chinese who produced a preliminary report on the rail-link, but it was so unimpressive-looking (eight pages, half of them in Chinese) that the Tanzanian minister to whom it was sent lost it, probably mistaking it for a laundry chit.

The diplomacy that preceded the building of the railway was lengthy and was a much busier *indaba* than the construction itself. The bulk of this book is taken up with comings and goings, queries and retorts, what happened in Zanzibar, how Kaunda got drenched in Zomba – that sort of thing; and anyone who expects the book to be another *Man-Eaters of Tsavo* – Kenya's great railway story – is going to be sorely disappointed. It is by no means as naïve as is superficially suggested in its chapter headings (' . . . To the Hills of Paradise', 'From Dream to Lifeline'). Apart from its generally uncritical treatment of President Kaunda and its portrayal of President Nyerere as a folk-hero who spends his spare

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Martyn Goff, *Daily Telegraph*

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Auberon Waugh, *Evening Standard*

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Michael Joseph

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time translating Shakespeare into Swahili (he did one play, *Julius Caesar*, badly, a number of years ago), the book is mainly concerned with international relations, and not laying track. But this is fair; after all, the history of this railway is the history of the larger part of East and Central Africa practically from the moment of its independence, and the recent completion of the railway will determine to an enormous extent the political orientation of these countries for some years to come.

I think myself that the Uhuru railway is one of the best things that has ever happened in that region of Africa, and Hall and Peyman have provided the most complete political history of it we could want. In the widest possible sense, this book explains the new tensions in Africa. The Chinese are not fools, as any foreign businessman at the Canton Trade Fair will testify. They will undoubtedly expect a reasonable return on their estimated outlay of 450 million dollars (Kaunda, incredibly, says the Chinese are fulfilling 'the Christian Gospel'). There were few hitches and very little drama in the building of the railway, although these could well come later with the running of it. It used to be thought that a vast aid project in an underdeveloped country guaranteed the donor limitless privileges, but Africa is littered with solid gold begging bowls. The Soviet Union's recent experience in Egypt ought to be borne in mind by any charitably-minded government keen on offering, say, a nuclear reactor to the folks in Burundi. It remains to be seen what the Swahili or Bemba response will be to the Mandarin cry of 'All aboard!'

CONTRAST & CONNECTION

Bicentennial Essays in Anglo American History. New research and thought combine to make this symposium by twelve distinguished historians, a fitting commemoration of the Revolution of 1776. THE EDITORS. Professor H. C. Allen is the Dean of the School of English and American Studies, University of East Anglia, and R. F. Thompson is the senior lecturer at the same university. (£8.95 net May).

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John Fuller

Get Knotted

Vicious Circles and Infinity: a Panoply of Paradoxes by PATRICK HUGHES and GEORGE BRECHT *Cape* £2.50

Readers of this book are told how to construct the world's smallest electronic brain at the cost of one penny. This brain will, moreover, answer questions at present beyond the power of any other computer. If that is not sufficient reason for immediately going out and buying the book, I don't know what is, though it has the added advantage of being the sort of present you can buy in bulk to keep nephews awake, drive aunts into the asylum and generally enliven the loos and guest-rooms of friends who may never speak to you again.

That electronic brain will be useful, since the authors seem bent on squeezing one's own gradually into a sort of round wrinkly nothing (like the strange substance Coleridge envisaged in a laudanum reverie, something between horse dung and baked apples). They do this by quietly recounting all the impossible statements that have to be true, and all the inevitable arguments that are nonetheless impossible, that they can think of: it is in the effort of decent compromise that the mind founders. I'm talking, of course, about ordinary bourgeois minds like yours or mine, though there's no doubt that even a *premier grand cru classé* mind like Bertrand Russell's begins to show a wrinkle or two faced with some of these paradoxes. We hear of Russell simply staring at a blank sheet of paper for several years, wondering whether a class of classes that are not members of themselves is a member of itself or not. Philosophers have been playing with these paradoxes for years, at least since Zeno invented Achilles and the Tortoise in the 5th century BC.

I first became acquainted with them through reading Gilbert Ryle's excellent *Dilemmas*. I understood from him that the solution to most paradoxes has to do with the way they are expressed, and that we can very well learn about ordinary habits of thinking by unravelling the knots their terms get us into. He dealt bodily, I seem to remember, with the pitfalls of fatalism and made even fairly obvious mechanical paradoxes like Zeno's infinite division seem worth study. As a consequence of reading Ryle, I wrote a poem about wilful self-deception called 'All the Members of my Tribe are Liars'. One is put in mind, too, of the miniature psycho-dramas of Laing.

Messrs Hughes and Brecht are not concerned, however, with psychology. Nor do they intend to provide a full history of philosophical paradoxes. Their book is an annotated anthology graced with headline *mots* of a more literary kind from Samuel Butler, Juvenal, Groucho Marx, *Catch 22* or Yiddish proverbs ('If the rich could hire other people to die for them, the poor could make a wonderful living'). It also has an illustrated section including Escher's false stairs, Magritte's aesthetic illusions and Mr Hughes's own contribution to *The Guinness Book of Records* (a photograph of a circle of 80 people each sitting an another's knees).

I won't reveal the secret of the electronic brain, but here is another sample, one version of the Hangman or Surprise Inspection Paradox, quoted from Martin Gardner:

> Imagine that you have before you 10 boxes labelled from 1 to 10. While your back is turned, a friend conceals an egg in one of the boxes. You turn around. 'I want you to open these boxes one at a time,' he tells you, 'in serial order. Inside one of them I guarantee that you will find an unexpected egg. By "unexpected" I mean that you will not be able to deduce which box it is in before you open the box and see it.' Assuming that your friend is absolutely trustworthy in all his statements, can his prediction be fulfilled? Apparently not. He obviously will not put the egg in box 10 because after you have found the first nine boxes empty you will be able to deduce with certainty that the egg is in the only remaining box. This would contradict your friend's statement. Box 10 is out. Now consider the situation that would arise if he were so foolish as to put the egg in box 9. You would find the first eight boxes empty. Only 9 and 10 remain. The egg cannot be in box 10. Ergo it must be in 9 . . .

But of course it would then be *expected*, and your friend would be proved wrong again. The upshot of all this is that the egg can't possibly be in box 9, nor for the same reasons in *any* of the boxes after all. What is wrong? This book may not have the answer, but it will keep you guessing.

Margaret Drabble

Scarlet Dodo

The Weeping and the Laughter by VIVA KING *Macdonald & Jane's* £5.95

Viva King's autobiography is described on the cover as 'a witty account of her life and friends' – a bold claim. In the preface, more modestly, Mrs King says:

> I feel it is presumptuous of me to describe my life . . . especially as Angus Wilson offered to write this book for me. However, I decided to try my luck myself.

The book itself hovers somewhere between modesty and immodesty; it is episodic, vivid, at times alarmingly candid, but occasionally lapses into those dull strings of well-known names which even the most disciplined of autobiographers seem obliged to drop. And Viva King, friend of the famous, and famous hostess herself, is certainly interested in names. She treats us to fleeting glimpses of the great: Sitwells and Rothensteins, Nancy Cunard and John Gielgud, flit through her pages, and she is often frankly annoyed at having failed to recognise past or future stars – Isadora Duncan, met in Montmartre, 'seemed to me just an old *passée* dancer. In youth one can't always take advantage of or recognise people who will one day be legends'. But however unrevealing some of her offhand references are, they do by their nature substantiate her

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own claim – that she was not, in any conventional sense, a snob. She loves eccentricity, she loves adventurers and Bohemians of the old style, and is more curious about personal fame than about heredity.

The value of this book lies not so much in its catalogues of guests and invitations as in its author's sharp eye for small unrecorded details of fashion and history. It is these, and not the names of the great, that evoke an age. While one cannot help wondering what so distinguished an amanuensis as Angus Wilson would have made of this life, we can find here much of his raw material: the darling dodoes, the extravagant fancy-dress parties of *No Laughing Matter*, the sporting sponging gentlemen of small means who live in studios and boarding houses: they are all here. Viva King, as a girl at the beginning of the century, in Paris, Bruges and Knocke was, she says, 'a rather ill-behaved giggling flapper', and she goes on to tell us what a flapper was:

> girls in their teens whose hair, not yet up, was tied with a black silk bow and flapped as they walked. To call girls of the Twenties 'flappers' is a misnomer. . .

It was not all wine and roses: there were also bugs, and dying mothers, and parents-in-law with money who refused to die, and inconsiderate lovers. She is quite open about these subjects. She sent her mother to die in the workhouse, in a manner of speaking, was delighted to inherit her property and gain her independence, but was haunted, not surprisingly, by nightmares about her mother's death. She lost her virginity with the ruthless determination of the time, and was known to acquaintances as 'the Scarlet Woman', but does not seem to have been prone to transports of passion: she married Willie King, a ceramics expert, in her thirties, and is not particularly indulgent in her descriptions of him, either. (He drank.) Her most shocking confession is of the eagerness with which she waited for Willie's parents to die; she and Willie had had enough of living beyond their means on a small ceramics income. She herself worked: she made dresses and theatrical costumes. One wishes she had been less modest about this aspect of her life, for it would have been interesting to know how she learned to do it, how she trained and where she found custom, and to have seen pictures of her work. Her interest in style and fashion runs through the book, and she has a fine eye and memory for clothes: her earliest points of recall are fixed by a vision of a leg-of-mutton sleeve.

But what will NEW STATESMAN readers make of the frivolity of this lost world? Viva King lived through two world wars, the General Strike and the depression, but does not have much to say about the rights and wrongs of them: the General Strike was a good excuse for appearing at a party in walking shoes, when one had no others; the Red Cross uniform suited her; she danced on a swastika in Nazi Germany, and was advised to be careful. Politics are not her theme. At times, one cannot tell if wit or unconscious irony is at play, as in the delightful sentence: 'Six months before the outbreak of war we flew to Frankfurt and went on to Kassel, where Willie wished to see an early mounted Chinese bowl.' A Chinese bowl, indeed. And yet one must admire the instinct for personal survival, the indifference to disaster, the high camp courage. It may not be a matter of life and death to us to know at what point, precisely, women started to talk about cooking at polite dinner parties, but it is certainly very interesting. She is as good on food as she is on clothes. How they used to eat, in the days of wine and roses. No wonder poor Viva spent most of her life worrying about getting fat. Her descriptions of this particular anxiety are extremely disarming, and the caption of the photograph of herself aged seven months deserves applause. A modest book, finally, with enough wit to give us a sense of many good jokes gone by.

Edward Pygge

Maws

The Deep by PETER BENCHLEY *Deutsch* £3.25

Short of producing specially weighted, large-print rubber books for underwater reading, the man Benchley has done everything possible to make amphibious members of the human race feel at home. First he issued *Jaws*, a frightener designed to rid the sea of dilettantes – juvenile schnorkelers, uncles on inflatable mattresses, that sort of thing; and now *The Deep*, which in addition to giving normal citizens new subaquatic horrors to keep clear of, reassures the web-footed folk that since humans on land are just as vicious as fish, one might as well stay on the sea-bed where one belongs. Lafayette Conklin, writing from Hollywood, reports a rumour that the next Benchley effusion, tentatively entitled *Glub glub*, is about a child in Baltimore who develops gills.

Meeting the author half-way, I have been reading *The Deep* in the bath, evenings, after the central heating comes on. The steam-heat of his Bermudan setting has been effectively simulated. With a loofah and a sponge for natural vegetation (the sponge also comes in handy for sticking your biro in) and a can of beer for holiday luxury, I felt pretty well kitted up. Wrinkled, but happy, I dived into 1943, where two salty old crusts or vice versa are butting through the channels of Benchley's imagination in a tub called *Goliath* and trying not to bump into any islands. In the hold, under the cheap tin trays, lies a cargo of morphine and heavy ammunition. On the horizon, a storm. ' "Nae worry," said the mate, smiling and patting the wheel. "She can ride 'er out." ' Within two pages, the Scottish fool is shaking hands with Davy Jones, ar, while the sunken ampoules and artillery shells await the scuba divers of the Seventies.

Suddenly, with a peculiar shuddering groan of soaped flesh on enamel I slid down the back of the bath. My head crashed into the water. For a moment, all was darkness. Then a sponge impaled on a biro floated past my face, and I seemed to taste the acrid tang of fluoride. Had it always been like this? Over my head, a tidal wave shot back

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Constable

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from the tap end and hit the wall with a resounding slop. As I surfaced, I was just in time to see the last gallon or so disappear over the side, on to the underpants carelessly dropped below. My outstretched arm had saved Benchley, though, and I returned to him with a new respect.

So this honeymoon couple comes to Bermuda. He, the second time around, is lean, fibrous, pleased with himself – obviously in need of a holiday. She is 'not classically beautiful, but vibrantly, viscerally appealing', and thus a better bet than fantasising about Billie-Jean King, which is what his first wife reduced him to. Their days they spend undersea, where you can live the good life even without martinis. And of course, they find the ampoules, and go showing them round the island to all manner of blackguards until a seven-foot Red Indian lighthouse keeper with powder-blue eyes and an Anglo-Scottish accent puts them right.

Treece – for it is he – is a character so patently cobbled up to accommodate Robert Shaw, the badger-headed actor, that you feel you've seen the film already. And to a great extent you have, though the sharks this time are relative tiddlers, giving place to another delightful character called moray eel, who jumps out at you from his crevice and drags you off with his inward-sloping teeth. I came to think of him as Naeworry Moray, though Treece, for some reason, calls him Percy.

Well, as Treece says, 'there's more mysteries hidden by the sea than you or I can fathom'. If Benchley had discovered one, my bath-time would have been immensely enlivened. But when everything turned into a Spanish treasure hunt and then ended with a colossal bang, just like the *Jaws* film, I nearly drowned the rotten book. In fact, I dreamt I had drowned it, but all the commas came wriggling out and swam away, doubtless to grow into sharks.

"This amazing and absorbing book"

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Observer

Revolutionaries without Revolution

by André Thirion

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CASSELL

Valentine Cunningham

Blighton Lock

Silence by SHUSAKU ENDO *Peter Owen* £4.25
Summer Overtures by CLIVE MURPHY *Dobson* £3.50
The Day Before Sunrise by THOMAS WISEMAN *Cape* £3.50

Shusaku Endo has been called the Japanese Graham Greene, and Graham Greene, for his part, believes *Silence* to be 'one of the finest novels of our time'. Written by a Roman Catholic, presenting (with an appearance of the guilelessness that's often perceived later to be about as harmless as a serpent) the sad and heroic story of Japan's 17th-century persecution of Catholics, and dealing in the issues of apostasy, martyrdom and the baffling silences of God, *Silence* certainly smacks continually of Greene's racked Catholic world. It's based on historical actualities – the endeavour in the 1630s by Portuguese priests to enter Japan, following the stunning news that Jesuit Christovao Ferreira, their hero and teacher, had apostasised after the admittedly horrendous torture of being suspended for days upside down over a pit of sewage. Fathers Rodrigues and Garrpe survive early mishaps only to be captured and tortured, mainly by the knowledge of the tortures (beheadings, drownings and such) which their refusal to trample on holy images causes to be inflicted on faithful Japanese. The tale proves to be engrossing, even if you can see from a long way off that it will lead inevitably to the apostasy of Rodrigues.

But in many respects it's not engrossing enough: neither Rodrigues's spiritual conflict over God's apparent refusal to speak to him or act to save His believers from pain, nor the novel's central theological puzzle (should Rodrigues trample on Christ's effigy out of a Christ-like love that would save the sufferers he can actually hear groaning in the Pit?), manage to clamber beyond the merely diagrammatic. Even the grotesquely tragi-comic Kichijiro, a Judas who keeps betraying and then repenting (noticeably akin to the cowardly-brave buffoon in *The Seven Samurai*), remains subdued. The flatness of the tone in English (I've no way of telling how the prose sounds in Japanese) corresponds to the novel's real lack of moral resonance. And consequently the would-be biggest issue of all, raised by the persecution-devising Magistrate Inoue – whether Japan isn't simply too alien a culture for Western Christianity to survive in – isn't netted at all cleanly. The simple facts (and the narrative comes hung about with a clutter of documentation, letters, diaries, coroners' statements) fail to speak entirely for themselves. Graham Greene animates such dilemmas much more memorably.

One mick in London at a time was apparently enough for Beckett, and certainly 'Murphy on the jobpath' was alone enough to quell with terror whole areas of the great metrop. But Clive Murphy invests with startling courage in a whole four Irishmen, each warringly intent on finding an occupation that will make some dent on the city. The heroes – if they're properly entitled to that title – of this picaresque plot *à quatre* are old-fashioned gruesomes brought pointfully up to date. Things begin with Marcus Denton, a young Dublin bastard picked up at the Serpentine Lido by a Belgravia painter who has a Negro houseboy of coolly diverse sexual proclivities, and launched into a circuit of assorted faggery and unaccustomed luxury. He also pursues arcane dermatological researches that bring him notoriety in the public prints, especially the *Catholic Clarion*, in which project he's abetted by Charles Mulligan, a prostitute whose knowledge of the public lavatory scene proves a great boon to the progress of skin science. Mulligan claims in fact to be 'the author of this manuscript', but that's dubitable given his general failure as an author (even when assisted by a debby publisher's daughter) and the novel's refusal to clarify whether it was he or Denton who mugged the ageing man of letters Frinton Purback with a length of iron bedstead. Just in time to halt the novel's centre from bursting for want of something to hold all this sprawl together, in flies Dominic O'Dwyer, a Galway 'bucko', who acts as tutor to several scions of rich socialist families, including the hare-lipped handful borne by Mrs Livingstone. Somewhat breathlessly and barely credibly, the four Irish weirdoes are shunted together and united after a fashion in the maternal refuge of Dominic's landlady, Miss Peach.

Summer Overture effects a scramblingly excited gatherum of seedy orts and fragments, with no temptation towards adventures on the side being ever resisted (O'Dwyer is even sent to Leeds so the author can have some fun with a pupil called Ziggy Slyz, and to Paris so he and we can drop Livingstone junior). The fiction appears to be striving for an angle on the corruptive nature of the city, and what its merry men are put up to is always sordid enough. But though the novel persists in blaming London, its protagonists seem never to have possessed any innocence to be tarnished by urbanity. Clive Murphy is no Henry James; and not least in his manifest affection for what he only half-heartedly professes to deplore.

Thomas Wiseman's *The Day Before Sunrise* concentrates with edge-tool efficiency and mounting tension on American Intelligence efforts to trade SS immunity for a speedier end to second world war hostilities. The action zings attentively between Berne and the beleaguered Berlin, and throws together contrastingly the veteran SS thug Schöller and the young American code-expert Elliott. Elliott is made to learn, with the reader, the ins and outs of weaponry, geography and Gestapo efficiency, as well as how the CIA will later coopt useful war-criminals to help stop the Russians. A sharp, gripping read.

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Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Hope Against Hope

The Zykovs *Aldwych*
The Three Sisters *Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford*
La Grande Eugene *Round House*
Cycle Sluts *Broadway, Kilburn*

The archaeologists of the RSC have reason to be proud of their long, and continuing, Gorki dig; but their discovery of *The Zykovs* does not, I fear, rank with that of *Summerfolk*, still less with *Enemies*, the one great treasure they've disinterred. Of course, it's unlucky that it should come to light the same week as a fine revival of *The Three Sisters*, since the two plays have in common enough to make comparison inevitable and not enough to allow it to be friendly to Gorki. Each looks askance at an aimless and enervating present, and each peers into a far-off future when people, even Russian people, may actually be fulfilled and happy. The merits of hard work are extolled in both, though in neither does anyone seem sure what kind of hard work is most likely to accelerate the millennium. The trouble with Russia is perhaps 'a maximum of metaphysicians, a minimum of mathematicians', a conclusion no less apt for being thrust into the mouth of a cold, competent and predatory German, Gorki's steel-tipped variation on Chekhov's *arriviste* plunderer, Natalia Ivanovna. The old order talks, a new one grabs – what's to prevent the process continuing until the mean have inherited the earth?

The answer, as we now know, wasn't just 'finding good people' who 'believe in the possibility of a different kind of world', the proposal that feebly trickles out of *The Zykovs*, nor was it simply 'educating the industrious people and making the educated people industrious', as Vershinin suggests in *The Three Sisters*. It had to be social cataclysm, a prospect not contemplated in the Chekhov play and dismissed with a brisk shrug by Gorki. He was writing in 1913, eight years of disappointment, disillusion and Czarist repression after the revolutionary dry-run of 1905; and his play shows us a society with liver spots in its red-rimmed eyes and plaque all over its teeth. Corruption is rife. So is cynicism and its bastard half-brother, nihilism. Old Zykov, the merchant adventurer, is neglecting his timber business for the child-wife on whom he ignominiously dotes. His partner is bamboozling him. His son is drinking himself to death. And, to cap it all, his sensible sister is being wooed by the local Lucifer, a forest warden who has (it seems) been embittered and perverted by the erosion of his political expectations. 'Nobody needs a revolution any more,' he remarks, summing up what one senses to have been Gorki's darker thoughts at that drab time.

So the play raises big issues, just as *The Three Sisters* does. But Chekhov somehow persuades us that those issues, those bouts of 'philosophising' to which Russians seem peculiarly prone, are the natural extension of his characters' personal hopes and griefs. Gorki doesn't always manage that. *His* people couldn't be described as the very voice of suffering Russia. One sometimes feels that *The Zykovs* is two plays, and that Gorki hasn't given enough energy to either public or private one, still less to integrating each with each. To be sure, he digs some telling truths out of the troubled marriage of old Zykov and his convent girl. She's interestingly awful, a nice demonstration of how purity can be priggish, simplicity stupid, honesty self-righteous, frankness destructive, love selfish and a widely-advertised 'goodness' less sympathetic than much supposed 'badness'. But the denouement, which has her rejecting her uxorious husband, him jealously attacking his son, the boy botching his suicide, and then the two male Zykovs sobbing over each others' cheeks, is little more than melodrama, and mawkish melodrama at that. We've seen that final reconciliation a thousand times in American TV series: 'Pop!' go the quivering lips, and back comes a throaty monosyllable, 'Son!'.

Some plays seem untidy because they're brimful with life, some because their authors haven't enough control over their characters and ideas. *The Three Sisters*, if you can call it 'untidy' at all, belongs to the first category, *The Zykovs* to the second. It's a report on the state of Russia that disintegrates into an emotional mess, or (if you prefer) a high-class soap opera that stutters into political debate; and David Jones, for all his sensitive successes with *Enemies* and *Summerfolk*, can find little coherence of tone, atmosphere or meaning in it. Paul Rogers, let me add, hits off Zykov's snarling misanthropy very well, though not the slavishness of the old mastiff's passion for his bitch-princess. She is played with querulous solemnity by Mia Farrow, Mike Gwilym cackles and shrugs through the part of the son, and there are decent performances from Norman Rodway and Janet Whiteside. The one oddity is Sheila Allen's Sofia, the sister-widow whose steadying nature keeps the Zykov household from fragmentation. She begins austerely enough, but by the end this responsible, controlled character has become a Shaftesbury-Avenue prima donna, all extravagant gesture and lachrymose throb. On the second night she was flinging about feelings like custard, rarely persuading us she meant them. This is not, I think, the way to prove that *The Zykovs* is a solid, thoughtful piece, worth resurrection in England in 1976.

No one nowadays is likely to deny that *The Three Sisters* is all that, and more. The play is too rich for a director to ruin, and also too rich for him to bring off completely. But Jonathan Miller offers as near to a satisfactory production as I can recall: simply staged, freshly played, at once bold and perceptive in its treatment of feeling. He knows that one reaction to intolerable frustration may be prolonged and helpless laughter, which is precisely what possesses Janet Suzman's wry, withdrawn Masha in a memorable bedroom scene. He also knows that people who fib about their emotions are prone to wild overemphasis, which is why John Shrapnel's Andrey shrieks, rails and bludgeons an innocent chair while he's publicly defending his frightful wife. So one might go on, invoking Sebastian Shaw's distraught doctor, or Angela Down's tense and earnest Irena, or any of several others; but I hope to have a fuller chance to celebrate them in a few weeks, when they reach London by way of Billingham, Glasgow, Birmingham, Newcastle, Brighton and Leeds. If you live in any of those staging-posts, you should catch them as they pass.

It seems odd to cross the Channel in order to send up Marlene Dietrich, Sarah Bernhardt and *Jesus Christ, Superstar* and even odder to come all the way from Hollywood just to pass on jokes about Loretta Young, beauty contests and hairdressing salons. But that's the way of the week's drag shows, a disappointment to those of us who hoped for insights into gay lib or, indeed, into anything else. They are, however, very different. The French are cool, elegant and Pre-Raphaelite, pale-faced hermaphrodites led by an ethereal gentleman called Erna von Scratch; the Americans are scrawny, hairy and hideous, clodhoppers in suspender belts. The French glide and mouth to classy Muzak; the Americans clatter, prance and inarticulately bellow to accompanying rock. The Americans offer raw energy, the French exquisite style. They are, respectively, the rough and the smooth of female impersonation; but only the most dauntless theatregoer will want to take both.

Television

Dennis Potter

Were You There?

Muddied oafs and flannelled fools have long since accepted that to everything there is a season, but there are some wilder theologians who go so far as to claim that man is profoundly *homo ludens* and that our trivial little games are nothing less than signals of transcendence, joyously pointing to another order. I cannot agree with this, except when Fulham are winning. Yet any snooty rationalists who accidentally tuned in to the Cup Final on Saturday or, better still, blinked their way through the film of the victorious team's triumphant return to Southampton on Sunday's *News*, will surely have felt stirrings of unease at the wanton sights on display. They might even deduce that religion is not yet defunct, but merely transposed, and that if God is dead his ashes have been scattered between a pair of goal-posts, wooden staves joined to each other

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by a piece of what can only be called old, rugged cross bar.

'Tell them you were there!' shouted the Southampton manager on Sunday at the cheering hordes who pressed around him, a phrase almost exactly catching the words and intonation of a familiar evangelical hymn. His eyes were alight and his face blazed with exaltation. The FA Cup was being borne back like a holy relic, and various disciples touched it with tremulous awe before the precious chalice was held aloft for universal acclaim. An emphatic brass band oompahed 'When the Saints Go Marching In', and it certainly looked as though everyone except a rather disdainful newsreader wanted to be in their number.

There was so much sport on television last week that it would seem to be prudent self-defence to seek out at least a residue of significance in all those hours of muscular endeavour. Soccer, rugby, cricket, athletics, boxing, wrestling, ice-hockey, horse racing, power-boat racing (and probably some tiddlywinks too) squeezed their different shapes and rhythms into the same box within a few days, spilling over into news items, discussion programmes and a drama slot as well as filling their own noisy enclaves. Even giggling *That's Life* (BBC-1) on Sunday managed to get in on the trend with one of their all-fall-about misprints, a newspaper report of a Stoke City defender 'with knee and thing injuries'.

The affliction, whatever it is, cannot be half as bad as the wounds delivered upon the bewildered Manchester United team at Wembley the day before. Almost everybody had expected them to win. Bobby Charlton, on BBC, thought they might get half a dozen goals. Jackie Charlton, on ITV, promised that 'they'll run Southampton off the park'. ITV brought over 'an illustrious Dutch astrologer' to read what the heavens foretold. He parted his hair and announced that 'Manchester will win without a shadow of doubt' although in the first 25 minutes 'there will be much blunders'. He turned out to be as hopelessly wrong as the resident stargazer on the *TV Times*, who 'looked at the planetary positions during the Cup Final afternoon' and found that 'Southampton will collect their losers' medals'. Move over, Saturn, you're as bad as Jimmy Hill, or even as stuffed with hot gas as an academic economist, one of whom turned up on this week's *Money Programme* (BBC-2) to describe an economic theory as 'a multi-dimensional time bomb'. (This is how the world ends, not with a bang but a bang bang bang).

Sorry, but the dismal science is everywhere: David Coleman, the BBC commentator, dragged it in at the start of the big game when the two managers led out their teams. The Southampton boss will be hoping to do well, he said, because 'there are so many good jobs available in Great Britain at the moment' – a claim that will astound at least a million people, if not Callaghan and Thatcher sitting one behind the other (as ever) in the stands. By this time – like most viewers – I had decided to stick with the BBC coverage, tired of ads for beer and aftershave lotion which sounded so alike that they might indeed be made in that same large chemical factory of popular rumour.

Hours before the match began, the cameras spent their time rehearsing for the next day's *Song of Praise* by dwelling on the buntings and banners of the opposing factions, red for United (conveniently, the Red Devils), yellow for Southampton, who have always been known as the Saints. DEVILS EAT SAINTS waved behind one goal, SAINTS EXORCISE DEVILS fluttered behind the other, a sporting eschatology which Coleman described as 'marvellous scenes of celebration and hope'. The crowd sang 'Abide with Me' and then asked God to save the Queen, while she, in turn, by the expression on her face, was pleading with Him to take her elsewhere. Perhaps, though, she wanted the Hampshire team to win 'because her trainer used to be a director of Southampton'. Lovely, the things you hear on television: I thought it was called an equerry or Privy Councillor, not just a *trainer*.

The chuntering headmaster in Peter Terson's *Zigger Zagger* – happily repeated on BBC-2 on Cup Final Saturday – asked his charges to 'imagine life to be a soccer game', but the employment exchange put the question in more usual form: 'How would you like to be the human end of a machine process?' The play tried to get beneath the raw bravado of soccer hooliganism but paled into mere cabaret when compared with the colour and excitement of the real thing. Oddly enough, though, the last of unhappy *Terra Firma* (BBC-2) on Sunday was the only other programme in the 20 or so hours of sport last week to try to move inside the fantasies of the maligned soccer fan. A professor of psychology was on hand to insist that the supporters *did* feel what he called a spiritual uplift. 'We need to look more deeply into what is happening in these peoples' souls.' MUFC THE RELIGION claimed one of the mis-spelt red banners held aloft by fans who are hardly likely to believe that Jesus saves even when the Manchester United goalkeeper doesn't.

Films

John Coleman

Visi-Gothic

Tenderness of the Wolves *The Gate*
Brown Ale With Gertie *The Gate*

Beware of national stereotypes, but it nags at me increasingly that Rainer Werner Fassbinder – probably the first three names to spring to mind when the resurgence of German cinema figures on the critical agenda – is not so much something new as something old, borrowed and blue. His debt to Sirk has been sniffed out (by now, it might well be snuffed out): and, via that, a tie-in with Teutonic expressionism. His prodigal output, in fact, is much more stylistically varied than a bow in that direction would indicate: we owe him at least that credit. Yet his apparent newness surely lies in his blueness, a sexual rawness, an explicit display of much that was sinisterly hinted at in the heyday of UFA. It comes, then, as no surprise that a film made by one of this sordid sorcerer's apprentices, Ulli Lommel's *Tenderness of the Wolves*, shown at three festivals in 1973 (Berlin, Edinburgh and London), should turn the clock back to a homosexual child-killer of the Twenties one Fritz Haarmann, whose penchant it was to lure lads back to his place under charitable guise, kill them before or after some sort of sex, and subsequently sell their chopped-up flesh as meat. After Edinburgh a reviewer waxed lyrical about Lommel's chunk of visi-gothic: 'If this superbly decadent movie is a typical example of its product [the Fassbinder factory], more of these films must be brought to Britain.' To each his own.

The Gate's hand-out keeps up the same sturdy we-can-take-it line: Fassbinder produced and does a pig-faced walk-through as a petty crook, 'but the humour and tongue-in-cheek style are obviously Lommel's'. For tongue-in-cheek, read 'teeth-in-neck' and, as for humour, one would need to be a connoisseur of such unwritten tomes as *The Wit of Himmler* or *Eichmann Entertains* to get the cream of this jest. Kurt Raab who wrote the script, plays shaven-headed, goblin-eared Fritz with the odd beck to the murderer of little girls in Lang's *M* (who was based, I thought, on the psychopath known as 'the vampire of Düsseldorf', Peter Kürten, and not Haarmann, as The Gate's publicity suggests) There are a couple of echoes of the Lang: a giant shadow on a wall as the killer perambulates behind the credits, a caught ball with children at play: Raab even has a shifty, wet-lipped resemblance to Peter Lorre at moments. Why, you may ask devote so much space to curious or misbegotten quotes? Because a certain lack of trust is set up where those promoting a film either go over the top or get their facts wrong. Lommel's film deliberately twists history, bringing Haarmann's story into the occupied, starving, scrounging Germany immediately following World War II: that is another business altogether and works reasonably well. Only reason has nothing to do with the outcome, which is pornography of an unrelishable kind. The police, as improbably thick as those in *M*, are shown enlisting Fritz as an informer, when they could have arrested him on a throng of minor charges. He makes use of this cunningly, handing over the occasional delinquent youth, flashing a cop's credentials to entice his victims. The procedures are highly reminiscent of Fassbinder's theatrical fade-and-tableau, dots-in-a-dirty-book style.

This said, there will no doubt be an audience for *Tenderness*, composed of viewers less concerned with what they are seeing than with how it is being presented In theory, the two should be inseparable (content and form): in practice, and particularly in artistic malpractice, they are all too distinguishable. Fans of Fassbinder may care to note that Margit Carstensen (of *Petra*), Irm Hermann (*passim*, but a flash here) and Brigitte Mira (a corrupt bar-owner) are variously on hand. As for the tenderness of the title, conceivably a reference to the solidarity of thieves and a hark-back to that confrontation with the underworld in *M*, it is thoroughly botched: Fritz's pimp ex-boyfriend and his whores seem to join

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finally in giving him away, but it registers – in a last procession away from the camera down an artificially-lit street – as at best perverted commas, a wilful ambiguity. Last near-quote: the director is claimed to have stated he was after a 'wish-fulfilment fantasy designed to enamour its audience of its psychopath hero' (*Sight and Sound*, Autumn '73). Fritz Lang bought his shot at a degree of sympathy with infinitely more subtlety – and, of course, a saving, moralistic curtain-line: 'We, too, should keep a closer watch on our children.' The current argument for films such as Lommel's is that they are likely to be closer to the stripped knuckle of truth, less mealy-mouthed: they display the corpses, the blood, talk everyday dirt, for all that they use some of the methods of expressionism. I can only propose, after a day or so of feeling my private pulse, that you go and undergo the experience for yourselves. To me, there is a sick and profiteering motivation behind the maybe ironically named *Tenderness*.

The same bill bites again with an accompanying British short, *Brown Ale With Gertie*, 32 surreal minutes written and directed by Alan Brown. A sight (and the word is put forward advisedly) closer to *A Clockwork Orange* than to any manner of parody of the TV *Cider With Rosie*, this nonsense is as grubby-minded as the aged trio of schoolboys which ruthlessly, senselessly kicks, screws, pees and rams through it. It has been applauded as 'totally un-British' and an assault on good taste; some doubts about the first (after all, we're as foul-minded as the next country, though possibly not heretofore in the cinema); a large question-mark appended to the second (what's so great about *bad* taste?). But three or four goodish jokes lie buried in the easy rubble of the rest, which Jean Vigo – at a guess – would have elsewhere given nought for conduct.

In General

Alexander Goehr

Off the Record

A letter to *The Times* from John Carewe, the director of the Brighton Philharmonic Society, has set off an argument about the very high fees demanded by 'so-called' superstars of the musical world. The sums paid for a conductor or a leading soloist nowadays exceed the total cost of a leading orchestra for the same period of rehearsals and concert. John Carewe expresses the plight of many out-of-London concert organisers who wish to offer their audiences the best. But, against international competition, they can no longer keep up in the race to pay the fees of the limited number of those great performers.

Some of the comments elicited by Carewe's letter have about them a whiff of 'little Britain'. It is assumed that the much-in-demand, highly paid international artist should, for the sake of his soul, take a cut in salary in order to have the privilege of performing in what often means poor halls with bad backstage facilities. He knows that he will be performing to audiences who live in communities which do not devote any substantial part of their rates to providing decent cultural facilities. But the small number of artists in the star and superstar categories charge a great deal precisely because there is competition for their services. They qualify to do this because people believe that they have something extra to offer, whether real understanding of the music or a lovely personality or, for that matter, a particularly nasty personality, but above all a willingness to provide the goods which a consumer society wants to buy.

Before the existence of mechanical means of reproducing music, there were also stars. Paganini and Paderewski, Mahler and Nikisch travelled from place to place, albeit more slowly and, in each new town, were obliged to meet and win over a new public. The taste of this public was formed by printed music and live performance only in a limited number, if not a single set of acoustic conditions. A man knew his Beethoven Five perhaps by playing the score on the piano, otherwise only as performed by the local orchestra in the town hall. Almost none of these limiting conditions apply to the present-day public.

The advent of commercial recording and non-commercial radio improved general standards by increasing the repertoire and making possible comparison between different performances in varying acoustics. Recordings and broadcasts were exact reproductions of real performances, in the way that a print is a reproduction of a painting; and like it, the recording depended on live performance. Traditional concert management was still sufficiently viable to absorb this useful extension of itself.

The situation really changed when it became possible to use magnetic tape for pre-recording. It was argued that it would be ridiculous to produce thousands of records including a wrong note. With the new methods, it was possible to snip it out of the original tape and stick in another bit with the right note on it. Similarly, where in the original performance the artist's concentration sagged, why not replace it from another performance? If the tone is dull, add echo. In time, an artefact has been created which relates to but is not identical with any actual live performance.

Now we may say that this was a natural development: that there is no way of controlling these things. But before we do, let us see some of the consequences. The artificial acoustics of modern recordings, on which it is possible to hear a kind of detail which, historically, was not intended to be heard in isolation and cannot be so heard in the vast majority of natural environments, make ordinary performances seem quite dull. The audience, conditioned by the certainty of the record playing on till the end, cannot enter into the spirit of an unpredictable live performance. People now go to a concert as consumers and feel cheated if things don't turn out the way they hoped. Critics of gramophone records have set a tone of certainty in their evaluations of interpretation and often public dissatisfaction with a performance may be traced to standards established only on record. In fact it is very hard to make such definitive judgments in live musical performance because it is not only a question of physical execution but a matter of understanding a piece and conceiving of a way of realising it which necessarily alters on every occasion. Only artists who appear on gramophone records and have the full benefit of the publicity machine provided by the managers will be likely to give the performances the public wants to hear. They must be limited to a handful: in order to establish a superstar, you have to establish that no one else can have his particular *je ne sais quoi*.

Conversely, live concerts are good advertisements for records. The trappings of show-biz and the high fees actually give the concert prestige which inflates the self-esteem of the public. To put on a successful event you must have certain artists. This 'economic law' becomes, in official statements, 'the highest standards'.

Of course there's much to be said in favour of records. Repeated playings make it possible to fix transient impressions and to predict satisfaction. Comparison of different recordings of the same work becomes a new musical science. But it is wrong that the musical public should form its criteria primarily from records. Artificial sound becomes the stereotype image and technically aided performance sets the standard. What began as a dependent of traditional musical life now controls it. Its managers say who will do what: it calls the tune. So, if you're running a concert, a lot more money must be found to meet very high fees of artificially inflated superstars to avoid the charge of being provincial and second-rate. In times of difficulty, if you need more money to pay the right conductor than the orchestra, you might be tempted to make savings. This means a reduction of rehearsal times and safe and popular programmes. And there is less money for providing good facilities, for specialised teaching and for the protection of minority interests, all of which contribute to genuine cultural standards.

It may be unrealistic to hope that the businessmen themselves will do anything about this. Orchestral managers and the Arts Council seem unprepared to intervene in what they apparently assume is an immutable situation. As Gerald McDonald quite bluntly pointed out (in a letter in *The Times*), market values and demand regulate cost in the subsidised arts, just as in commercial enterprises, and so must take account of the fact that contemporary audiences are more interested in celebrity conductors than orchestras or programmes. This may well be so, but the results can be disastrous. Music is an increasingly popular, but expensive art. All the things that are important in it are not commercially viable and rely on the protection of patrons of one kind or another. Contrary to the popular impression, great music, like *haute cuisine*, does not arise solely from the use of expensive materials: rather from the careful combination of good materials with a selection of the things that grow around us. Culture is a product of good husbandry over a period of time; it is not created through a series of lightning flashes in a desert however brilliant.

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Festivals

Alan Blyth

Lightning Tour

All roads for the devout Wagnerian must this year lead to Bayreuth where the Festival devoted exclusively to the works of the Master celebrates its centenary. However, those who do not already have their tickets in their pockets (or tucked away in some safe place) need not bother to apply, for all four cycles of the new production of the *Ring* (24 July-26 August) were long ago sold out. Interest centres on this new *Ring*, which is to be staged by the young French producer Patrice Chereau and conducted by Pierre Boulez, directing his first complete cycle. Rehearsals have already started, so nobody will be able to say the performances have been under-prepared. Britain contributes both the Brünnhilde of Gwyneth Jones and the Wotan of Donald McIntyre to the cast.

Down the autobahn, at Munich, the Festival gets in first (10 July-2 August) with its cycle of the *Ring* produced by Günther Rennert. The other event of note is a new opera – *Die Versuchung* by the 65-year-old Israeli composer Josef Tal. It will be conducted by another Israeli, Gary Bertini, and produced by the controversial German, Götz Friedrich (who, incidentally, completes his Covent Garden *Ring* cycle in September). A further journey along the autobahn, travelling east, brings you to Salzburg (25 July-30 August) where Karajan, having recovered from illness and (one hopes) the contretemps that marred relations with his singers at his Easter Festival this year, will preside over a revival of his *Don Carlos* production and conduct *Figaro* once again. This year there is only one new production, Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*, staged by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle and conducted by James Levine, a newcomer to Salzburg, and now the Metropolitan's musical director.

Holland (1-23 June) is staging in Amsterdam the European premiere of Carlisle Lloyd's *Of Mice and Men*, and John Cox skips over from Glyndebourne to re-create his Houston production of *Der Rosenkavalier*. The Deutsche Oper am Rhein visits Edinburgh (22 August-11 September) to give *Parsifal*, *Moses und Aron* and *L'Italiana in Algeri*, while the local Scottish Opera presents a new production of *Macbeth*, and has persuaded Galina Vishnevskaya to sing Lady Macbeth.

These are all large-scale events in big centres, but the festivals on the continent that still retain their charm and individuality often take place in much smaller places. Take the Fêtes Musicales en Touraine (24 June-4 July); here in the heart of France and in atmospheric old buildings many leading pianists will be gathering. Sviatoslav Richter has always been the presiding genius and he returns this year in the company of what is almost a Who's Who of pianists: Horowitz, Rubinstein, Serkin, Arrau, Brendel, Lupu, Ashkenazy and Eschenbach. The roll-call sounds almost too good to be true. Schwetzingen's delightful rococo castle near Mannheim always manages to find out-of-the-way offerings – last summer's modern work, *Puss in Boots*, was recently broadcast on Radio 3 – and this year, indeed just at the moment (2-30 May), Cimarosa's *Il marito disperato* is being given, to be followed by Kent Opera's *Venus and Adonis*, paired with *The Pardoner's Tale* by Alan Ridout and a concert performance of Paër's *Leonora*. In East Germany the old city of Halle remains faithful to its native son, Handel, and has over the years presented most of his operas. This year (5-10 June) his contemporary Telemann is included with his *Pimpinone*, given by the Warsaw Chamber Opera.

Further south Bregenz continues to offer its unique floating stage on Lake Constance, this year (22 July-25 August) *The Tales of Hoffman*, while in the more intimate surroundings of the Theater am Kornmarkt Donizetti's satire on theatrical life, *Le convienze ed inconvienze teatrali*, will be produced. The two Roman theatres, at Orange and Verona, naturally specialise in the grandest of presentations. Orange (24 July-7 August) has its first *Aïda*, produced by Peter Gougaloff, with Caballé in the title role, and *Lohengrin* with Jon Vickers making a rare appearance in the name part. Verona (15 July-29 August) is for once straying from Italian opera to present *Boris Godunov* with Nicolai Ghiuselev as the anguished Tsar. There will also be the familiar *Aïda*, elephants and all, with Placido Domingo as Radames.

This country is, of course, full of enticing festival sites, none more so than Glynde-

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MOZART Piano and wind quintet in E flat, K452; Piano concerto in C, K467;
BARTOK Divertimento for strings; Suite, Op14 (orch DORATI)

DAVID HASLAM conductor

Tickets 50p to £2 from Royal Festival Hall box office (01-928 3191) and through usual agents

The same programme will also be given in
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30th Stroud Festival

2nd - 17th October 1976

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Details from Festival Secretary:
78 Middle Street, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 1EA.

INTERNATIONAL POETRY COMPETITION
Closing Date 30th June 1976

S.A.E. for Entry Forms from:
Mr. D L. Worsfield, Shepherds Hoe, Rodborough Common, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5BN.

Harrogate Festival

Festival Director: Clive Wilson
5 - 18 AUGUST 1976

An International Festival of Arts and Sciences

Detailed information available in May. Programme includes: Janet Baker, Montserrat Caballe, George Malcolm, David Munrow and Early Music Consort, Andras Schiff, The King's Singers, Pierre Amoyal, Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, Vermeer Quartet, Michael Aspinall, and The Nash Ensemble, Scottish National Orchestra conducted by Alexander Gibson and Willi Boskovsky, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Choir and conducted by Louis Fremaux with Robert Tear.

International Young Musicians Concerts

'The Perfect Illusion' – exhibitions and film festival of the history of photography and cinematography – many original early prints and films.

Daily Children's Events.

Details from: Festival Office, Royal Baths, Harrogate, HG1 2RR (0423) 62303

WARRINGTON 1976 FESTIVAL

Warrington New Town Development Corporation has the task of building more houses, creating new jobs and improving the environment of a sizeable industrial town dating back to Roman times.

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The Warrington Festival, now in its fifth year, was initiated by the Development Corporation to improve further the quality of life in the town itself. It mixes international stars with community activities in the arts, sport and popular entertainment.

Warrington New Town

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bourne (1 June-8 August), although the prices are rather less inviting. It is visited for the first time by Ponnelle, who is in charge of the new production of *Falstaff*, conducted by John Pritchard, which opens the season. The repertory is predictably more popular than last year, and bookings are reportedly good even for the more *recherché* offering of *Capriccio*. A quick glance at the casts for these two operas, the two Mozarts and *Pelléas et Mélisande* suggest that those in charge have chosen well from among the younger generation of singers.

Aldeburgh is quite different but equally remarkable for its setting. Last year I was lamenting here that *Paul Bunyan*, Britten's operetta written to a libretto by Auden during the composer's American years, was not to be staged. That has been put to rights this season (4-20 June) with the work's British premiere at Snape by the English Music Theatre Company, which has arisen from the ashes of the old English Opera Group. Colin Graham and Steuart Bedford, the company's directors, produce and conduct respectively. Other events include the first performance of Britten's new cantata *Phaedra*, written for Dame Janet Baker, and a concert given by the whole Rostropovich family – the cellist himself, Vishnevskaya, and their two daughters, one of whom follows her father on the cello, while the other plays the piano.

The Brighton Festival is now in progress and continues until 16 May; its theme is Phantasmagoria. It is an Ian Hunter-organised festival; so is the biennial City of London (4-16 July), which makes happy use of the City's many historical venues. The steps of St Paul's (weather permitting) will be the scene for the opening performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony conducted by Barenboim. Berlioz's *Requiem* will be given inside the cathedral on 13 July with Colin Davis conducting. Zukerman directs all the Brandenburg concertos at the Guildhall on 6 July. Sir Bernard Miles and Prunella Scales give a programme which they have called *A Song at Twilight* at Mansion House on 5 July.

The 26th King's Lynn Festival (23-31 July), the first under the artistic direction of Christopher Hogwood, pays tribute to one of King's Lynn's most distinguished citizens, Dr Charles Burney. Two hundred years ago, his monumental *History of Music* was published, the fruit of many years travelling and scholarship. Several of this year's concerts will feature works either heard by Burney during his travels or well-known to him.

Bath (28 May-6 June) continues to reflect the taste of its director, Sir William Glock. Works by Elliott Carter and Stockhausen rub shoulders with music of two or three centuries earlier by Monteverdi and Bach. As at other festivals, maximum use is made of historic buildings – the Assembly Rooms, the Abbey, the Theatre Royal and the Guildhall.

A much less well-known event that does the same kind of thing is the festival in Great Irish Houses, being held for the seventh time this year (6-12 June), at such places as Castletown, Carton, Headfort, and Slane Castle. It is run by a group of friends, who were all undergraduates together at Trinity College, Dublin. Of particular interest this year is the premiere of Malcolm Arnold's second string quartet, to be heard a couple of days later at Aldeburgh, and played by the Allegri Quartet, led by the Irish violinist Hugh Maguire, who delights in introducing the quartet's programmes in his own irrepressible way.

Across the water at Harrogate (5-18 August), festival director Clive Wilson has succeeded in capturing the services of two of the world's leading singers – Montserrat Caballé and Dame Janet Baker, both of whom are giving recitals, to be followed by Michael Aspinall who, in his unusually wide-ranging falsetto, imitates the foible of prima donnas. The Early Music Consor (in *The Play of Daniel*) and the King Singers, two of the most popular festiva hopping groups in the country, are bot appearing here.

Just a few miles away York is having it triennial Festival and Mystery Plays (1 June-4 July) – always a broad and ambitiou event. This year is no exception, with th premiere of Thomas Wilson's opera *Con fessions of a Justified Sinner*, presented b Scottish Opera, and new works by Lutyens Aribert Reimann, Roger Smalley an others, as well as massed bands, jazz, schoc music, pop and exhibitions. It sounds lik Northern enterprise at its best.

Weekend Competition

No 2411 Set by Maud Gracechurch

The egregious Tony Blackburn has been doing the publicity rounds for his new collection of nursery rhymes. Competitors are asked for pop-song versions of familiar nursery rhymes. 12 lines or so by 21 May.

Result of No 2408 Set by Tim Hopkins

Competitors were asked to devise an all-purpose Competition Report.

Report by Len the Unlucky

The hot mists of resentment and paranoia came swirling round Great Turnstile this week, as disappointed competitors seized on 2408 for some transparent grousing about comp. mores. Bitch, bitch, bitch: not enough money, not enough space, the meddling with the copy, the cliquishness, the arrogance of Spiro Keats, the tetchiness of Little Keith. Your chastened Reporter awards £6 to each entry printed – and apologises to Southampton supporters everywhere.

Another week, another Comp.;
Another mildly ribald romp:
Some vaguely booksy *jeux d'esprit* –
A giggle laced with *ennui*.
Some throbs of pleasure, stabs of pain:
The luckless cry: 'Not *them* again!
He's, plainly, *Fat Jeff*'s effing brother –
While *she* is *Spiro Keats*'s mother!'
With every Comp. there'll aye be grumbles
About the way the cookie crumbles:
So this – to each result-resenter:
Remember – no one *has* to enter.
Like hundreds, *this* Result embraces
Stalwarts mixed with Newer Faces:
And if just *one* good laugh is had,
That can't (in Gulag Hour) be bad.

SIMON LITTIMER

A not unreasonable response, all things considered, but the bumper prize remains unclaimed. In fact, it's now so large that I can't see how I shall ever be able to award it, so perhaps I'd better stop talking about it. Even so, it would help if you could give H. James, E. Gibbon and J. Joyce a little rest, and try someone more recondite. But that's your pigeon. Now where were we? Ah, yes. Tim Hopkins sent in an unpublishable entry; to him £1 hush money. As for the winners: 10p each, and better luck next week.

V. F. CORLEONE

A rough week. You all seem to forget hov much better I know than any of you abou what is funny and what is not. Gracechurc put me off totally with her scented notepape (which she probably calls writing paper), an Watson's smelt of disinfectant, was too thir and was marked as being the property of H.M Government (whoever he is, though I like th name, and shall probably use it). Vita-Finz spoiled his chances by writing in Cantonese which was not against the rules admittedly, bu I've changed them subsequently. So there I've completely re-written the winners, alloca ted new and wittier pseudonyms, so it's a comp in itself determining if you've won at all. Yo are such a naughty class. Please try much *much* harder.

WAYNE SIDESADDLE

A poor/fair/average/good/excellent week Most competitors failed to see/managed t grasp/were quick to seize the point and th standard of verbal felicity was low/about pa for the course/phenomenally high.

(*For inclusion once a month.*) Still waiting for the absolute stunner that will make m laugh all the way to El Vino's and qualify fo the special bonus prize I keep on about, which with accumulated interest my pocket calcula tor tells me is now £25/£50.50/£250.03½.

(*For inclusion once every six months.*) A prude am I not, but 10 Great Turnstile isn't a porn shop either, and I warn the more copro philous New States-Compersons that obscene assault and battery will get you nowhere.

Dividends this week, *comp d'habitude* in what I've heard called Pseudonyms Corner to all fully paid-up members of the Woddis Co-Operative.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

OK. So perhaps the idea wasn't as funny as it seemed at the time, judging by the slimmish entry that survived the Post Office's obstacle course. Slimmish, that is, if you don't count Parrott's multiple attempts, and personally I didn't. Even he had an off week and needs to try harder to reach the standard of a Gracechurch or a Cheeseman. No marks to those competitors who took the easy way out by translating medieval French poems into alphabetically rhyming palindromes, and Brewer's erotica about Amynta's nightgown was much too funny to print here. £6 to Fagg for old time's sake and the same to Fuller, Rattigan and Simpson because their names do lend the page a bit of class. £12 to van Schaick.

GEORGE VAN SCHAICK

The Chess column has been unavoidably held over.

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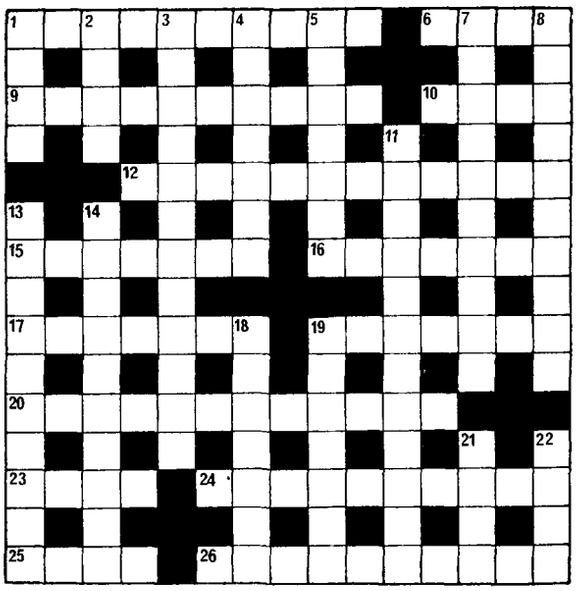
Weekend Crossword 1163

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1163, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 18 May.



ACROSS

1. The person in court gives mother the main point before payment (10).
6. Account for a tool (4).
9. I removed powder, but made a showy appearance (10).
10. Love gives painful back (4).
12. Men of the air discover traces hidden in the water (12).
15. Catches starers out of order (7).
16. Sooner a nobleman that is a king (7).
17. Churchmen in entering disreputable places (7).
19. It is sharp to go in for betting having inside information (7).
20. The potentially learned greet the author's address (6,6).
23. River which takes the same direction twice (4).
24. We try to communicate about articles on action of the elements (10).
25. Backing favourites for pace (4).
26. An interest in ruins provides an attractive pastime (10).

DOWN

1. Be clumsy although it keeps one's hands warm (4).
2. The deity holds love to be a virtue (4).
3. Oddly morose about forcing an opening (12).
4. Naughty children finish by spoiling a class (7).
5. Something sweet may become Electra (7).
7. One of these would make a mess of realities (10).
8. Trials stay rearranged in play (10).
11. Alienation found in the longest range men try to see each other from (12).
13. Theirs is outdoor work and legs tan freely (4,6).
14. Test a girl for the source (10).
18. Young man without incentive to become a doctor (7).
19. Make a noise quietly, for it is empty talk (7).
21. Beach without a girl (4).
22. 'His acts being seven —' (*AYLI*) (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1161

Prizewinners to No 1161

Mrs D. East (Oxshott)
Charles Duce (Valkeakoski)
Ms L. Aitken (Glasgow S1)

APPOINTMENTS

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Salary: $A12,835 — 5 x $628 — 2 x $627 = $17,229.

Further information and application forms are available from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF, or from the Registrar, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia 3083.

Applications close on 14 June 1976.

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Particulars from the Registrar and Secretary, The University, Sheffield S10 2TN, to whom applications (5 copies) should be sent by 21 May. Quote Ref. R.384/D.

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For informal enquiries please contact both Mrs Goodacre, Area Director, Oxfordshire Social Services, Stonehouse, 40 South Bar, Banbury, telephone number Banbury 52421 and Miss B. D. Gormly, Principal Social Worker, Psychiatric Division of Hospitals, Littlemore Hospital, Littlemore, Oxford, telephone number Oxford 778911.

Application forms from the Director of Social Services, The Moors, Kidlington, Oxford to whom they should be returned within two weeks of the appearance of this advertisement.

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 91 No. 2355

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Entertainments

SOCIETY FOR ANGLO-CHINESE Understanding: Public Film Show of Chinese Mount Everest expedition 1975, plus new documentary from Peking TV. In colour. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., WC1. Saturday 15 May, 7.30 p.m. Entrance 40p.

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Theatres

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HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. Final perfs. at 8, Sat 5 & 8, 'Lenz,' by Mike Stott. Red price prevs Fri. 14 – Sun. at 8, 'Dom Juan,' by Molière. Opens Mon. 17 at 7.

LYTTELTON. (New National Theatre) 928 2252. Fri. & Mon. 7.45, Sat. 2.30 & 7.45, 'Watch It Come Down,' by John Osborne. Tues. 7.45, Wed. 2.30 & 7.45, 'Plunder.' Thurs. 7.45 'John Gabriel Borkman.' Over 100 excellent £1 seats on sale day of perf.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Beckett Season. Eves at 8, Sat. 5 & 8.30. 'Endgame.' Director: Donald McWhinnie.

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Exhibitions

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836. Henry Moore, Stonehenge lithographs and Elephant Skull etchings: single Prints now available.

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Poetry

THE POETS: A. Alvarez & Ian Hamilton will read at 7.45 p.m. in The Wine Bar, The King's Arms Pub, Sloane Sq, SW1 on Wed. 12 May (nearest Tube Sloane Sq.). Entrance fee: 50p, Students 30p, OAPs 20p. (This event has been organised with financial assistance from The London Poetry Secretariat). Arranged by New Arts Trust.

MATCHLIGHT POETRY Thurs. 13 May 7.30 p.m. The Black Bull, 358 Fulham Rd, SW10. The Matchlight Readers (professional actors). Guest, Aquarius Magazine with Thomas Blackburn, Edwina Sorel. Inquiries: Eileen Warren 352 1409.

D. J. ENRIGHT
and
PATRICIA BEER
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Meetings

GOLDSMITHS' COLLEGE
School of Adult and Social Studies, Lewisham Way, New Cross, SE14.

'NINE DAYS THAT SHOOK BRITAIN'

A Saturday School to recall and examine experiences, feelings and lessons of the General Strike.

Saturday 15 May 2.30 - 6.00 p.m.

Speaker: H. J. Fyrth, BSc (Econ), FR Hist. S. Also 'Songs of our Society' conducted by Cornelius Cardew; Exhibition, etc. Admission Free. Tea available.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
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FREE PUBLIC LECTURES,

SUMMER TERM 1976

Thurs. 20 May at 6.00, Lecture in Nordic History by Dr Ada Polak, 'The Decorative Arts in Scandinavia, 1530-1830'.
Mon. 24 May at 5.30, Inaugural Lecture by Professor P. D. Henderson, 'Two British Errors: their probable size and some possible lessons'.
Mon. 14 June at 5.30, James Joyce Lecture by Mr Stuart Hampshire, 'Joyce and Vico'.

Complete list of public lectures from Publications Office, University College, Gower St, London, WC1E 6BT. (Stamped envelope required.)

'ASPECTS OF TIBETAN ART' by M. H. Robins. Tibetan antiquities, ill. talk. 7 p.m. Tues. 11 May. The Tibet Society of the UK, 45 Belgrave Square, London SW1. 01-235 3720. Callers welcome. Open. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon.-Thurs., Sat. Programme, details of facilities, crafts, etc. on request.

THEODOR HERZL SOCIETY & London University (E.M.Dept.), 57 Eton Ave, NW3. Tues. 18 May 8.15 p.m. History of the Holy Land. Dr Meir Gertner: 'Chassidim, Chovevim, Chaiutzim – Mainsprings of National Revival'. (postponed from 6 April).

YOUNG FABIAN GROUP. Tues. 11 May John Gollan speaks on 'Western European Communists', 8 p.m. Cole Room, 11 Dartmouth St, SW1. All welcome.

CRISIS IN RHODESIA
A public meeting in support of the struggle of the Zimbabwe people
Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1
WEDNESDAY, 12 MAY, 7.30 p.m.
Speakers:
JUDITH HART MP
ELLIOTT KENDAL (Director, C&RR Unit, British Council of Churches)
ABDUL S. MINTY (AAM)
DAVID STEEL MP
Chairman: BOB HUGHES MP
Admission 10p—tickets available from AAM, 89 Charlotte St, London W1 (01-580 5311)

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled: 'Excavations at Sonkh (District Mathura, UP)' will be given by Professor H. Härtel (Director, Museum of Indian Art in West Berlin), at the Institute of Archaeology (Lecture Theatre – G6), 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1 at 5.30 p.m. on 11 May 1976. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

MAURICE RHEIMS, will give a lecture on 'L'amour des objets à travers les âges: mode, passion, spéculation.' on Tuesday 11 May at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place, London SW7. Tel. 01-589 6211 ext. 38. Admission free.

'ABORTION AND THE LAW.' Sue Abse, of the National Abortion Campaign, will give her views on the present situation, and you can give yours at – Young Mapam, 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6 (Nrst tube Finchley Road). 8 p.m. Sun. 9 May. All welcome.

AFRICA CENTRE. Dr Kenneth Cragg on 'Islam and Christianity'. First in series of talks, displays, films. Tues. 11 May 6.30 p.m. 38 King St, WC2. 836 1973.

E.N.P. Queen's Hall, Barnstaple. 15 May 3 p.m. Hansford-Miller, John Stonehouse. Adm. free. Seats bookable. 01-852 0627.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 8 May 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 11 May 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 12 May 7.30 p.m. – 'Buddha Day' – Special Commemoration at Caxton Hall – speakers include: Christmas Humphreys, Ven. Saddhatissa, Ven. Lama Chime Rinpoche, Ven. Vajiragnana. Flowers for Shrine will be welcome. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

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'EARLY 19C. FRENCH UTOPIANS: Simon': Peter Seltman. Sun. 9 May 11 a.m Sunday Forum Sun. 9 May 3 p.m. 'Th Dangers to Peace'; Sheila Oakes. Tuesda Discussion on theme 'Mind and Brain' Tue 11 May 7 p.m. 'The Prolongation of Lif and the modern Concept of Death'; D Chris Pallis. South Place Ethical Societ Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London WC1 01-242 8032.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 5 Holland Park, W11. Sun. 9 May 5 p.m Swami Bhavyananda on 'The Katha Upanis had'. Wed. meeting at 6.45 p.m. All wel Vedanta mag. 40p.

THEOSOPHY. Public Talk & Question Sun. 9 May 8 p.m. Free. 'The Vision of th Buddha' S.a.e. for programme, book li & literature. ULT, 62 Queen's Garden London W2 3AL.

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One-day symposium Friday 18 June 1976

Speakers include: A. H. Halsey (Oxford University), George Smith (Oxford University) and Henry Clother (NUT).

Fee: £8.50.

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Two-day course Thursday and Friday 24/25 June 1976

Participants include: Walter Eltis (Oxford University) and Stuart Holland (Sussex University).

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Details of all courses from: **Rosanna Poccaterra, Short Course Unit, PCL, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 (Tel: 01-486 5811 ext 284)**

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